HEIDEGGER & THE QUESTION OF RENAISSANCE HUMANISM

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Heidegger and the Question of Renaissance Humanism

Four Studies

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Heidegger and the Question of Renaissance Humanism

Four Studies

I

Italian Humanism and Heidegger's Thesis of the End of Philosophy

The End of Metaphysics

THE TERM "HUMANISM" HAS SUCH A BROAD MEANING today that we have forgotten its precise historial sense.[1] By Humanism I mean that philosophical movement which characterized thought in Italy from the second half of the fourteenth century to the final third of the fifteenth century. In my view, Ficino's translation of Plato at the end of the fifteenth century and the speculative metaphysical Platonism and Neo-Platonism which it triggered led to a break with the Humanist approach to philosophy, which was taken up later only by isolated thinkers such as Nizolius or, outside Italy, by Vives and later by Gracian in his theory of *ingenium*. Finally, the Humanist controversy reached its height in the thought of Giambattista Vico, whose work provides an outline of the whole range of Humanism's implications. Hence, the Humanist tradition should not be discussed as a purely literary question. We must approach Humanism also from the standpoint of its philosophical significance and importance today. Otherwise, Humanist research can have no fundamental interest for us.

This approach is based on the awareness of philosophy coming to an end as metaphysics, of philosophy being overcome by the model of knowledge present in formal logic. Metaphysical thought claims to begin with original principles in order to define reality. Because these immediate principles cannot be proven, they therefore—so it is claimed—cannot have any scientific character, for either they arise from an intuition or they come from so-called immediate evidence. In neither case do they admit of scientific

examination. This thesis has its most mature statement in Wittgenstein's *Tractatus*.[2] Science can proceed only when its general validity can be proven, hence only in the sphere of the laws and relations that hold between the terms of a system. In other words, assertions and contradictions can occur only within concrete systems. The system cannot found its own presuppositions, for they are the basis of the system. Outside the symbols of the system lies nothing but silence and mystery. By means of simple formulas and the adoption of rules, symbolic logic seeks to construct a system that has a purely formal character and so must dispense with all metaphysics. I have in mind here the doctrines of Frege and Carnap, and Stegmüller's assertion that for propositional logic the "truth value of complex molecular propositions depends upon the truth value of their elementary propositions, but not upon their meaning."[3]

British and American analytic philosophy develops this doctrine in different ways. In the philosophy of science, logic receives an even greater and more influential function because it proceeds from the idea that theories represent only certain systems of classes and hence investigation must limit itself to the study of the logical derivations which are found to hold between the elements of these classes. In this way logic does not answer the question of what kinds of things and relations are thereby investigated. The present-day doctrines of formal semiotics, structuralism, and literary theory find their philosophical foundation here.

The rejection of metaphysics naturally leads to the assertion of the primacy of rational language, which is presumed to be the only kind of language to have validity in the sphere of science. Along with this goes the rejection of every type of Humanism, a rejection like that which we find today among French philosophers such as Foucault.

Heidegger's Twofold Thesis: The End of Philosophy and the Primacy of Poetic Speech

IN HIS LECTURE "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking,"[4] Heidegger formulates a claim concerning the "end of philosophy." His thesis is that "Philosophy is ending in the present age."[5] With this, however, Heidegger is not making a negative judgement, for he is pointing out that an epoch of thought has come to its final conclusion: "The end of philosophy is the place, that place in which the whole of philosophy's history is gathered in its most extreme possibility."[6]

Traditional Western thought beginning with Plato (*not* with the Pre-Socratics) took its point of departure from the problem of existence as something given in order to answer the question of the Being of beings (*Sein des Seiendes*) by means of a process of rational inference, discussing this topic in the context of the relationship between existence and thought taken as the problem of logical truth. Heidegger claims that a far more basic and original problem is passed over here; the problem of the unhidden, openness, *Lichtung* ("a clearing"), in which existence itself appears. He writes:

> The substantive "opening" goes back to the verb "to open." The adjective *licht* "open" is the same word as "light." To open something means: To make something light, free and open, e.g., to make the forest free of trees at one place. The openness thus originating is the clearing. What is light in the sense of being free and open has nothing in common with the adjective "light," meaning "bright"—neither linguistically nor factually.... But light never first creates openness. Rather, light presupposes openness. However, the clearing, the opening, is not only free for brightness and darkness, but also for resonance and echo, for sounding and diminishing of sound. The clearing is open for everything that is present and absent.[7]

Accordingly, the traditional problem of the *lumen naturale* is the presupposition of traditional metaphysics, but this is not the original problem because light breaks through only where the forests are already cleared (*gelichtet*). Only in this *Lichtung* can there occur a difference between light and darkness. Things, human beings, gods, and arts can arise and show themselves only in this *Lichtung*: the historicity of being-there (*Da-sein*) and of the questions that are concerned with it emerged exactly here.

The new problem is also "original" because, seen strictly historically, it is also the leading question of the Pre-Socratics, e.g., of Heraclitus and Parmenides. Heidegger shows this through his interpretation of the fragments of the Pre-Socratics. This problem is the question of "unhiddenness" (*Unverborgenheit*) or, rather, the question of the structure of the original framework in which "being-there" can take place. Hence, it becomes no longer necessary to ask about what exists in the way traditional rational deductive metaphysics does. Rather, we can ask about that original process of how and where the being of what is becomes "open," "reveals itself" (*sich lichtet*), or "appears" (φαίνεσθαι).

Heidegger's decisive thesis in this context is that it is not the rational word which can claim primacy here, as in traditional metaphysics, but rather the poetic, metaphoric word, which possesses the original power to clear a path (*lichten*). Language is the "house of Being."[8] Heidegger claims that man's being-there has its actual residence in language, for "where word breaks off no thing may be."[9] In his interpretation of Stefan George's poem *Das Wort* Heidegger writes:

> The closing line, "where word breaks off no thing may be," points to the relation of word and thing in this manner, that the word itself is the relation, by holding everything forth into being, and there upholding it. If the word did not have this bearing, the whole of things, the "world," would sink into obscurity, including the "I" of the poem, him who brings things to his country's strand, to the source of names, all the wonders and dreams he encounters.[10]

This is the originality of the poetic word.

Heidegger's starting point is his interpretation of the fragments from Parmenides and Heraclitus and of the chorus in Sophocles' *Antigone* as well as, finally, the poems of Hölderlin and Trakl. From there he comes to offer the thesis that the poet is the one who founds the time and the place of being-there.

The Muses "Open" the Cosmos

HEIDEGGER'S THESIS IS SO FAR from our usual rational thinking that it is necessary, in order to grasp his thesis in all its dimensions, to go back to the ancient Greek tradition.

The second principal part of the *Phaedrus* begins with a solemn reference to the Muses, in connection with the myth of the cicadas. Socrates and Phaedrus lie under the shade of plane-trees on the bank of the Ilysses. Socrates points out that the cicadas "as is their wont during the heat, sing and talk among themselves above our heads, looking down on us."[11] The cicadas, Socrates explains, originally descended from human beings who lived before the time of the Muses. When the Muses were born and began to sing, a few of these humans became so enthralled by them that they forgot about food and wanted only to sing, so that they almost died unnoticed. These lovers of song were turned into cicadas and endowed by the Muses with the gift of needing no nourishment from their very birth, so that they could do nothing but sing; their task was to report to the Muses. Then Socrates comes to speak about the Muse of Philosophy. "To the eldest, however, to Calliope, and to her sister next in age, Urania, who are placed pre-eminently amongst the Muses, above heaven and above humans and divine speech, and who emit the most beautiful sounds; they announce those who live philosophically and honor their kind of music."[12]

The myth of the cicadas is at first a strange one. What, for instance, is the meaning of the condition of man "before" the birth of the Muses? Why should men have been so fascinated by the Muses and their work that they went so far as to forget about food?

In order to be able to answer these questions, we must, first, briefly concern ourselves with the nature and the hierarchy of the Muses.

At the beginning of the *Iliad*, where the Muse is first invoked, Homer says θεά, i.e., goddess. In the attribute of the "divine," something "absolute" is meant, which well befits the Muses. The god nearest to them is Apollo. It is in his company that the Muses appear in the *Iliad* (I. 603), in the *Odyssey* (VIII. 488) and in Hesiod (*Theog.* 94). The poets call them the singers and sayers: "Sing" and "Announce," they ask at the beginning of the *Iliad* and the *Odyssey*. Homer has them sing at the feast of the gods (*Iliad* I. 604) Aristides, the orator, reports a lost hymn to Zeus by Pindar (*On Rhetoric* II. 142) in which the creation of the Muses is motivated by the gods themselves.

The problem in the *Phaedrus* is what Plato meant by the condition of men before the creation of the Muses and by their "enraptured" condition after the appearance of the goddesses. Among the activities of the Muses, the concept of arrangement, of order, clearly plays a prevalent part. Order of movements appears in the dance, order of tones in song, and order of words in verse. Furthermore, order in the starting point for rhythm and harmony must be included in the list. Plato says in the *Laws*: "The order of movement is named rhythm, the order of voice, of the connection between high and low tones, is called harmony."[13] This reference to the "order of movement" seems particularly significant because movement represents a fundamental phenomenon in the realm of existence; whatever is perceived through it shows a certain becoming, that is, a movement in itself (change) or in space (locomotion). To order the process of becoming, however, means to harness it into measure, thereby preventing it from flowing out into the unlimited. Through the application of a measure, movement proceeds within certain barriers and under certain laws; it is, so to speak, "arranged." Thus, the Muses appear as divinities bringing order so as to let a κόσμος appear in the double sense of world and ornament.

The Muses represent the link with the objective, which makes the original order of the human world possible, in the face of the

arbitrary, the subjective, the relative, and the changeable. This explains the connection between Mnemosyne and fame. The man who is surrounded by fame steps into the presence of the eternally valid. The Muses "open" a cosmos: they design an ordered world where everything appears within its respective boundaries according to its own nature. Through the Muses, confusion, obscurity, and the like are cleared away and abolished. All these fundamental characteristics of the Muses create the state of μανία, of rapture, of frenzy. Mania as the origin of poetry and art is easily misunderstood, if simply identified with psychologically conceived ecstasy. In the interpretation of mania, we should take into account that it concerns an important event in which something nonderivable and archaic comes to the surface. The absolute as such can only reveal itself by taking possession of us. From this aspect, mania appears as the specific mark of the archaic realm.

Musal man is "wise" (σοφός) in the original sense of the word. Wisdom consists of being in possession of nondemonstrable archaic indications. Thus Pindar says: "The Muses called upon me as the chosen harbinger of wise words, to pray for Hellas of the fair dance."[14] In terms of wisdom, the proof of one's vocation can never be the result of rational demonstration but only of the realization of one's own being which stands as witness and example (*exemplum*) for absolute reality. What the individual expresses by authority of the Muses consists of statements and announcements of divine power. The singer Thamyris, for example, who used his gift for the expression of subjective matters, i.e., for his own intuitions, was punished and deprived of his faculty (*Iliad* II. 594).

According to the Greek conception, a poet, a harbinger of the Muses, is considered the only man who is able to order whatsoever is moving him by virtue of μουσική, and who thus abolishes the fortuitousness, the chaos of the phenomena. "Poets can confidently hear this from the gods, but to find it out for oneself is a hopeless effort on behalf of mortals" (Pindar, *Paean* 6. 51 ff).

We now begin to understand what Plato meant when he spoke of the condition of man before the birth of the Muses, in other words, of what the Muses really brought to man, and of why those

who devoted themselves to them forgot everything in favor of musical activities. With the appearance of these goddesses, chaos was overcome, order was created, a cosmos appeared.

The Traditional Model of Scientific Thought

THE HUMANIST TRADITION, with its thesis of the philosophical task of the poetical word, is radically different from traditional metaphysics and, hence, from the thesis of the preeminence of the rational deduction of beings. Ever since Aristotle, to whom medieval thought returned again and again, it has been maintained that the object of knowledge is only that which "is," that which in fact exists—what is as what is (ὂν ᾗ ὄν)—namely that which always and everywhere is.[15] This is that which is eternal (ἀίδιον) and unmoving (ἀκίνητον).[16] Aristotle explains that everything is either this principle or follows from it (ἀρχή as what is first and what governs). According to such an interpretation, true reality is deduced by a rational process from what is "original," from "being" conceived as the highest thing, that is, as that which most truly is.

For this reason the only scientific kind of language is *logical* language; rhetorical, poetic language is excluded from the framework of science (which itself includes philosophy as metaphysics). Rational thought claims to have a "hold" on the essence (οὐσία) of phenomena by means of the concept (ὅρος) and the definition by which it can "grasp" it. In this way phenomena are "fixed" *once and for all* in a necessary abstraction from time and place. All empirical variations that are not general are then inessential. Mere "human language," i.e., our ordinary language, which makes use of images, metaphors, and analogy, cannot claim to be scientific. This is why poetry belongs to literature and rhetoric as an art of persuasion.

Neither when Descartes calls upon the *cogito* as an original axiom for the definition of knowledge, nor when Kant deduces knowledge from original forms of experience and thought, nor when Hegel gives his a priori dialectical deduction of the real do we ever

leave this model of rational deductive thought. This model extends from ancient times through the Middle Ages up to today's analytic philosophy. The apriorism of German Idealism was the final metaphysical conclusion of such a conception. Significantly, not only rhetoric, but every form of metaphorical or imagistic thought or speech, including poetic thinking, is excluded from the field of philosophy by Descartes, Kant, and Hegel.

A Basic Problem of Italian Humanism

THE TOPIC OF OUR INVESTIGATION is the contemporary relevance of Italian Humanism and its problems. From the beginning of the study of Humanism a century ago, with Burckhardt and Voigt, to Cassirer, Gentile, and Garin, scholars have seen the essence of Humanism in the rediscovery of man and his immanent values. This widespread interpretation is, for example, the reason why Heidegger—as we will see—repeatedly engaged in polemics against Humanism as a naive anthropomorphism.

One of the central problems of Humanism, however, is not man, but the question of the original context, the horizon or "openness" in which man and his world appear. The amazing thing, usually overlooked, is that these problems are not dealt with in Humanism by means of a logical speculative confrontation with traditional metaphysics, but rather in terms of the analysis and interpretation of language, especially poetic language.

The problem of language brings up the decisive question of the relationship between word and object, between *verba* and *res*. Beside this stands the insight that *only in and through the word (verbum)* does the "thing" (*res*) reveal its meaning. The problem confronting us here is radically different from what we find in the tradition. We no longer ask about the logical relationship between thing and thought or about logical truth, but rather about the historical appearance in language of the thing by which a different world is revealed. Only because scholarly research has not sufficiently recognized and appraised this new approach and has looked most

of all for metaphysical and theoretical problems concerning the relationship between the world and thought could such scholars as Cassirer, Curtius, and Kristeller deny that Humanism had a decisive philosophical significance and admit only Ficino's Platonic thought and Renaissance Aristotelianism as representative of the philosophy of the time.

The Poet As the Founder of the Community

THE PROBLEM DISCUSSED ABOVE FOUND its first expression among the Humanists not with a philosopher but, significantly, with a poet, Dante. Dante poses the question of the relationship between the poetic word and the historical structure of the real. In his two theoretical works about the essential nature of language, *De vulgari eloquentia* and *Convivio*, Dante formulates the thesis that the poet is the founder of the community and that therefore only he opens the way for historicity. Humanistic thought does not emerge in his political work *De Monarchia*, which remains confined within the deductive procedure of traditional metaphysics. Rather, it emerges in the theoretical writings about language.

Dante condemns scientific Latin as an "artificial" language or, as he says, as a purely "grammatical" one because it has nothing to do with man's historical development. He claims its structure is "inalterabilis locutionis, diversis temporibus atque locis . . . per consequens nec variabilis esse potest."[17] Dante strives to check the various Italian dialects in order to see whether it is possible to create a unified historical language for his time and country. He makes use of a metaphor in which he compares his search with the hunt for a panther that is hidden in the depths of the woods of the various dialects.[18]

Dante claims to open the way with his poetry to a new political reality and thereby to found a new epoch. The "πόλις" or place of the community is not there for him from the beginning. It "develops" or arises through the poetic, imagistic, metaphoric word. In this sense it claims to be "political": "And I give this dignity to

this friend [i.e., the language of the people] in that I let that which it has within itself as something possible and hidden come out into the open, as that which is its own proper task."[19] Here we have the poet as orator!

The characteristic nature of language that the poet here proposes as the calling forth of a historical task consists in its "opening" function. It is directed to an "unhiddenness" in which an emperor, institutions, the future of a country and of a community can "appear." This language is the "theater" (from θεάομαι, "to see") of a new world. "For although we have no court in Italy in the sense that it is recognized as the only one in the way that the German Emperor's is, it is not because we lack the members of such a court. Just as the members of the German court are united by a single prince, the members of our court are united by the light of reason."[20]

So Dante came to his thesis that the experience of the poetic word is the origin of human historicity.[21]

Philology As the Study of the Historical Word: Leonardo Bruni (1370–1444)

DID DANTE'S THESIS ABOUT THE FUNCTION of poetic language decisively influence the Humanists who followed him? The primacy of the problem of language underwent a shift. The interpretation of a text, a task which faced the Humanists in the concrete case of the translation of Greek texts into Latin, necessarily led to a renewal of the problem of the relationship between *res* and *verba* and resulted in a deepening of the problem. Here we are not faced with the question of the logical relationship between thing and thought, but rather with the original dimension in which words permit the meaning of things to appear. A word can reveal meaning only in reference to the context in which the word stands. From the very fact that the texts are different, it follows that the same words can also have different meanings and cannot be logically fixed for all time. The ability to persevere in this process of self-revelation during the in-

terpretation of a text and to witness with astonishment the transformation of a word is what constitutes the essence of self-education: philology, love of the word

In the discussion which followed Dante, it was Leonardo Bruni who assumed a key position with his philological work. In *De recta interpretatione* and *De studiis et litteris* and in his prefaces to translations of Greek texts, Bruni rejects every a priori unhistorical interpretation of language. A word transmits different and changing content or meaning in different cases depending upon the individual context in which it stands. "All words are ceremoniously connected [inter se festive coniuncta] like a multicolored floor and mosaic."[22]

Surprising as this may sound, philology turns out, from the standpoint of its "scientific" structure, to be a stage of dialectic taken in the Aristotelian and not in the scholastic sense of the expression. Philology must begin with the speaker's particular situation, that is, not with the abstract, defined, and once-and-for-all rationally fixed meaning of a term, because what is important is the "situation" in which the term stands, the *circumstantiae* that "lie around it." The source of the "actual" revelation through the word of what is, is not *ratio*, but rather that human capacity which permits words to have adaptability (*versutia*),[23] *acumen*,[24] and "instantaneousness,"[25] and so allows the corresponding "things" to appear in *ingenium*. This alone and not a rational process of inference is able to comprise (*colligere*) the ability of words to reveal things. If the nature or form of language goes back to an a priori *sermo internus*, as scholastic interpretation postulated, then it is impossible for language to reveal the particular concrete thing in all its variability and richness (*copia*). And it is precisely this towards which the Humanists directed their attention. For them, man's evolution is revealed in language: *litterae* as the *studia humanitatis*, philology as the revelation of man's *historical* possibilities.

Starting with this fundamental philosophical interpretation of language, the great Humanist educator Guarino Veronese proposed the thesis of the primacy of *litterae* over *scientia rerum*. In the same spirit Angelo Poliziano declared in his polemics against scholastic philosophy that he would no longer call himself a philosopher but

a grammarian. Lorenzo Valla's claim was similar, when he said that he was not a philosopher but a rhetorician.

Dante claimed that the poetic word permits reality to appear in terms of historicity. There is an obvious objection which can be raised against this position, an objection with which the Humanists repeatedly occupied themselves. Does not poetic language itself, with its metaphorical character, put a "veil" on the thing that it claims to uncover? The Humanists speak of poetry's *velamen*, behind which the actual *res* remains hidden. How then do the "veil" and *res* relate to each other? Must we not designate poetry as the area of rational contradiction since we attribute to it the opposing functions of "veiling" and "unveiling?" This problem is the main subject of Boccaccio's *Genealogia deorum*.

The Question of the Veil of the Poetic Word: Giovanni Boccaccio (1313–75)

THIS QUESTION ARISES in a surprising context in Boccaccio, far from every logical or metaphysical discussion. As a Humanist, Boccaccio was interested in rescuing Roman mythology. The meaning of this mythology was endangered because it stood in obvious contradiction to Christian belief. How is it possible to grant a meaning to this mythology despite this contradiction and to preserve it against a dogmatic relegation to the past? In other words, how is it possible to interpret the Latin gods and not simply dismiss them as a meaningless and confused error of the human mind?

Precisely this question underlies the *Genealogia deorum*. Through a military man named Donnino Parmigiano, the King of Naples asks Boccaccio how the Roman emperor, for example, could permit himself to be honored as a god. In order to answer this question, Boccaccio goes back to a theory of poetry based upon medieval presuppositions. Boccaccio's thesis is that poetry reveals the reality that lies behind a veil (*velamen*) which, when brought to light, permits the "thing," the *res*, to appear in unhiddenness. His first definition reads:

> The fable is an exemplary and demonstrable speech which unfolds behind a veil [fabula est exemplaris seu demonstrativa sub figmento locutio]. If its covering is removed, then the intention of the fable becomes obvious [cuius amoto cortice, patet intentio fabulantis]. Hence, if something appetizing appears under the fabulous veil, then the fable proves not to be something useless [non erit super vacaneum fabulas edidisse].[26]

We should take note of the following: The fable is an "exemplaris seu demonstrativa locutio." The *exemplum*, as we know, has a function in rhetoric similar to that of induction in logic. *Inducere* does not originally mean to derive a unity from a manifold by means of abstraction, but rather to trace a manifold *back* to a unity which gives meaning, in order to define it anew from there. Accordingly, the *demonstratio* that is the concern of Boccaccio's definiton ("fabula est . . . demonstrativa locutio") is not rational proof as in logic, but a making visible of something, an immediate "showing." The fable brings about a "clearing" (*lichten*) in a twofold sense, as Heidegger has shown in his definition of the poetic word. It opens up the place and the time in which things, people, and their institutions appear, and it does this in a light, effortless way, since it does not stem from a difficult, rational inference. Fables play a decisive role in this way when they arise in a world. They have an "archaic" meaning because they lead us (ἄρχομαι as govern).

Right after giving his definition of poetry, Boccaccio declares that the poetic fable "proceeds from the interior of the god" ("ex sinu dei procedens"). The capacity to construct fables is therefore a "gift" which only a few share. This explains the fact that the poets were always rare ("rarissimi fuere poete"). The results of this inspiration are sublime, such as the compulsion of the soul to speak ("mentem in desiderium dicendi compellere").[27] The unconditioned nature of language breaks forth in poetry; the poet cannot call upon it when and as he pleases. Poetry gives voice to an original *force*, a *power* ("ex sinu dei procedens") which is expressed in the word. It possesses an "inventive" character ("fervor exquisite inveniendi")

which enables it to make something obvious and open to view. As I have said, Boccaccio developed his theory of poetry in order to rescue the study of the Latin gods, since in the ancient poetic works gods appear in different forms and always in the most crucial places. But now Boccaccio finds himself in a dramatic situation: he cannot grant that his own theory has validity for the Old and New Testament beliefs; he himself is a Christian. Hence, he must leave behind the theory of poetry as the opening up of human history in order to identify poetry with Christian theology, that is, with a *res* that is outside of history..

Poetic, metaphoric, fabulous language is part of the Jewish and Christian tradition. We see this in the Old Testament, for example, when Moses speaks of God as a glowing flame ("Volle lo spirito mostrare rovo veridissimo nel quale Mose vide, quasi come una fiamma ardente, Iddio").[28] As an example of poetic language in the New Testament, Boccaccio names the different animal metaphors that stand for Christ. "Holy writ is nothing other than a poetic fiction when we say that Christ is a lion, then a lamb or worm, then a dragon. . . . How do the words of the Savior sound in the gospel, if not like a speech with a strange meaning, a manner of speaking, to which we usually give the name allegory."[29] In the next sentence he comes to the conclusion that "poetry is not just theology, but theology is also poetry."[30] Boccaccio repeatedly stresses the thesis that poetry has a sacred character. One can argue about where poetry first arose, but not about its sacred character ("cum sacris et ceremoniis veterum originem habuisse").[31] The poets are called *pii homines*:

> So in order not to extend this discussion any further, it follows from what has already been said that the poetic faculty belongs to those who are pious [piis hominibus poesiam facultatem esse] and that they derive their own origin from the sphere of the divine and receive their name from its efficacy [ex dei gremio originem ducere et ab effecto nomen assumere].[32]

"Unhiddenness" in Gods and in Men: Coluccio Salutati (1331–1406)

BOCCACCIO'S THESIS THAT THE PARTICULAR HISTORICAL WORLD, with its gods, institutions, temples, and sacred acts, arises through the poetic word is further developed by another Humanist thinker, who sought to carry it out to its logical conclusion: Colluccio Salutati. At first glance it may seem surprising that Salutati concerned himself with the defense of poetry in a work entitled *De laboribus Herculis*. In the ancient tradition Hercules was a mythical symbol of man's being in the world, insofar as he was regarded as the conqueror of the foreign powers of nature and the inventor of technical works.[33]

Salutati's work is directed most of all against "those who in our time glorify themselves as philosophers" ("qui se philosophos nostro tempore gloriantur").[34] For these are the ones who "belittle poetry and then condemn it" ("parvi pendere, tum damnare").[35] Salutati's thesis is that only through poetry does human historicity emerge into "unhiddenness." Poetry thereby assumes a pathetic function as the foundation of the human order. The selection of words, their sound, their rhythm leads to the recognition of the first form of lawful order which is the essence of wisdom. To illustrate this thesis historically, Salutati introduces the example of the poet Euripides to whom the Macedonian king Archelaos left the planning of the whole state ("summam consiliorum tradidit").[36]

Through poetry, men are "diverted from that which their senses present to them" ("a sensibus taliter traducebant").[37] Salutati repeatedly emphasizes that poetry diverts men from their senses ("adeo revocavit a sensu"), and so makes them believe something opposite to that which they experience with their own eyes ("quod ipsos id fecerit opinati cuius contrarium visibile percepissent").[38] It is just this "illusion" that lifts man from his condition of *ferinitas*: The world, the sky, the stars with their mythic designations become humanized. Earth and human world stand here in a fundamental interrelationship through the rise of "being-there." The poetic word

founds historical space and the times that accrue to this space ("quia maxima vis mentis est previdere futura, magis communiter et quasi per anthonomasiam usurpatum est, ut vaticinia predictiones ac etiam ipsi prophete iam vates certo vocabulo nominentur").[39] But is not this function of fantasy which depends upon the senses in fact deception? Salutati does not respond to this question with a rational metaphysical argument, but merely points to the series of works created by the poet: human society in its historicity.[40]

For Salutati, the deepest meaning is hidden beneath the surface of poetry. When he speaks of truth in this context, he does not mean logical truth but the self-revelation of the human world. The seers (*vates*) witness three things from the height of their *ingenium* (ingenii altitudo), whereby they ornament their history as with lights ("quibus sua poemata quasi luminibus exornatur"): God, the world, and the creatures ("deum, mundum et animantia") and thereby name everything that they call living beings ("ut per illum omnia et in illo omnia que animalia dicimus esse dicantur").[41]

In the unhiddenness which the poetic statement reveals to us, gods, things, and creatures appear with their original meaning. But here we must ask, if we are to speak of gods, with what gods are we concerned? Are we concerned with just those of the ancients or with those of the Old and New Testaments as well? Salutati's answer is that there is a single invisible God, revealed differently in different historical forms in different places and times:

> But since they [the poets] saw that God, the architect of the whole world, completed everything in wisdom . . . and yet wisdom is nothing other than God himself, they called God by different names although they felt that it was one and the same. . . . So it should not seem doubtful to anyone that even with such a large number of gods, the poets did not think of many, but of just one. But they variously named this God because of the divergent variety of his tasks, times, and places [Ut nemini dubium videri debeat etiam tanta deorum multitudine poetas non de pluribus sed de uno sensisse, sed eundem deum pro varietate officiorum, temporum, et locorum diversis modis nuncupare].[42]

The "Clearing" of the Primordial Forest: G. B. Vico (1668–1744)

HERE WE MUST INTERRUPT OUR DISCUSSION of the Humanist tradition and return to our original question: the theoretical significance and present-day importance of Humanism, especially in connection with Heidegger's thesis of the end of philosophy. To summarize this thesis once again, traditional metaphysics must today come to an end because it began with the question of the rational foundation of what is. In place of the question of logical truth, Heidegger explains, the much more original problem of unhiddenness must take its place, the question of the "clearing" (ἀλήθεια) in which "what is" first appears. Here a new task for philosophy arises, to uphold the primacy and originality of poetic language over rational language. We recall here Heidegger's explanation where he speaks of the etymology of the expression *Lichtung*.

Heidegger's thesis leads us to that eighteenth-century thinker in which the Humanist tradition achieves its deepest philosophical expression and significance: Giambattista Vico. With Vico, too, we have a final radical break with rational metaphysics. In his argumentation Vico develops all the theoretical themes that we have found in the Humanist tradition. In his *New Science*, Vico sketches out not an anthropology or a mere "new" theory of history, but rather the problem of the original unhiddenness in which man appears. He treats this problem from the standpoint of a twofold question. On the one hand, he is interested in the essence and structure of the *Lichtung* (*luci*) with which human history appears; on the other hand, he is interested in the primacy of the poetic word. Man breaks out of nature through startling fear at the experience of his own alienation from nature—the primordial forest—in order to create the first place of his historicity, the "new" world and its institutions, which arise from man's ingenious and fantastic activity. According to Vico "the first cities, which were all founded on cultivated fields, arose as a result of families being for a long time quite withdrawn and hidden among the religious terrors of the sacred

forests. These (cultivated fields) are found among all the ancient gentile nations and, by an idea common to all, were called by the Latin peoples *luci*, meaning "burnt lands within the enclosure of the woods."[43] In another place Vico adds that "the first fire lighted on them was that which served to clear the forests of trees and bring them under cultivation."[44]

Vico's work is interwoven with interpretations of myths: the Hercules myth as the symbol of human "being-there," the conquering of the primordial forests; the Cadmus myth of the formation of nature into something human and social, the being put into the world as the opening up of history; or the myth of Daphne and Apollo. In Vico's interpretation, Daphne's transformation into a blooming tree by Apollo represents the control of nature by an original power. This transformation into something else, something "new," characterizes mankind's origin, its family tree:

> Apollo begins . . . by pursuing Daphne, a vagabond maiden wandering through the forests (in the nefarious life); and she, . . . on standing still is changed to a laurel (a plant which is ever green in its certain and acknowledged offspring), . . . and the recourse of barbarism brought back the same heroic phraseology, for they call genealogies trees. . . . Hence the pursuit of Apollo was the act of a god, and the flight of Daphne that of an animal.[45]

For Vico, it is the imaginative word that gives rise to the world of human "being-there." The poetic word is the original and uniquely human attempt to give meaning to the frightful power of being which reveals itself in what is. Only by attempting to conquer this power can the historical world arise. "We find that the principle of these origins both of languages and letters lies in the fact that the first gentile peoples . . . were poets who spoke in poetic characters. . . . We discover in them true poetic sentences, which must be sentiments clothed in the greatest passions and therefore full of sublime and arousing wonder."[46]

For this reason Vico pointed out that philosophers and philolo-

gists should have begun with study of poetic wisdom, which was the first truth of the heathens, in the investigation of ancient philosophy and not with the abstract and reasoned truth of the scholars.[47]

Heidegger's Theory of the Brutality of Being: The Primacy of the Poetic Word

IN HIS INTERPRETATION OF SOPHOCLES' *Antigone* (Chorus, 332–75) Heidegger attempts to go over that area which poetry reveals to us in order to learn from this what man is. Beginning with Sophocles' verses that define man as the "strangest" creature, he writes: "We are taking the strange, the uncanny (*das Unheimliche*), as that which casts us out of the 'homely,' i.e. the customary, familiar, secure. The unhomely [*Unheimliche*] prevents us from making ourselves at home, and therein it is overpowering."[48] Because having a home is characteristic of man, and yet he is constantly being cast out of it, Sophocles offers the definition of man mentioned above. "Such being is disclosed only to poetic insight," says Heidegger.[49] The strange is the frightful in the sense of the overwhelming power that breaks out in mankind's fear and so comes out into the open. "To this place and scene of history belong the gods, the temples, the priests, the festivals, the games, the poets, the thinkers, the ruler, the council of the elders, the assembly of the people, the army and the fleet."[50] With such overwhelming power, man disturbs the peace of the earth, that is, of the growth, thriving and life of those creatures which exist without effort, taking them out of their fixed order and subduing them to his harness. Man assumes command by capturing and subjugating by means of his word and his historical being in the world. "The violence of poetic speech, of thinking projection, of building configuration, of the action that creates states is not a function of faculties that man has, but a taming and ordering of powers by virtue of which the essent opens up as such when man moves into it."[51] As the violent agent and creator who falls into the unspoken, man stands accordingly in a situation that is

constantly full of risk, before an abyss. In and through man's "putting himself into practice" he is confronted with what is overwhelming, namely with history, whereby that in which the human world appears needs the public "open" places (*Stätte der Offenheit*) in order to govern and be a power.

Taking up this thesis of the primacy of the art of the poetic word, Heidegger claims that art is what makes it possible for the power to govern to arise from nature. "It is through the work of art as essent being that everything else that appears and is found is first confirmed and made accessible, explicable, and understandable as being or not being."[52] In another place he says: "We do not learn who man is by erudite definitions; we learn it only when man contends with the essent, striving to bring it into its being, i.e. into limit and form, that is to say, when he projects something new (not yet present), when he creates original poetry, when he builds poetically."[53]

Conclusion

BOTH HISTORICAL AND THEORETICAL CONCLUSIONS result from these considerations. Historically, we should note that Heidegger's definition of Western thought—as rational deductive metaphysics which arises and unfolds exclusively from the problem of the relationship between beings and thought, i.e., in the framework of the question of logical truth—does not hold. In the Humanist tradition, there was always a central concern for the problem of the primacy of unhiddenness, openness, that in which historical "being-there" can first appear. For this reason we need to reassess and revise the historical categories which still govern our thinking. Most of all we must examine our understanding of the beginning of modern thought, Descartes' rationalism, and we must revise our notions of Humanism, the very notions of the discovery of man and his anthropomorphic capabilities, which Heidegger himself had as received opinion and which he therefore criticized.

A further conclusion to be drawn has to do with the transform-

ation of the basic categories by which we try to interpret the meaning of reality. The traditional categories can no longer claim validity and must give way to those that arise in the particular context of a historical situation. Philosophical language is no longer understood as rational, but as that language through which and in which there is a "clearing" (*Lichtung*) in which an age, an authority, a custom, or an institution can appear and assume power and in which its dangerous nature can appear. Instead of the logical problem of truth as correspondence (*adaequatio*) there is a need to consider the problem of "emergence," "appearing," or φαίνεσθαι. In place of the question of *ratio* and its inferential method, we face the question of the structure of the *ingenium* in the treatment of Vives or Gracian, a question that then becomes the main topic of thought in the Mannerism of Tesauro and Pellegrini and, finally, in Vico. This is the problem of the "uncovering" or "unveiling" of the real.

We have pointed to the parallelism between Heidegger's thought and the Humanist tradition, not in order to interpret the latter in terms of a Heideggerian Existentialism, or conversely, to force Heidegger's theory of "being-there" into a tradition which he did not himself know and which he misunderstood whenever he referred to it. The main object here has been to erect a historical framework in which the present-day relevance of the problems of Humanism can become visible to us, that Humanism which theoretical interpretations, literary studies, and pure historical scholarship have failed to recognize.

II

The Word as Referring and Debarring

The Problem of the Ontological Difference

TWO THINGS HAVE BEEN ACHIEVED so far in our discussion. First, we have discovered a surprising parallel between Heidegger's writings on the primacy of the function of poetry and analogous theses in Italian Humanism. Second, we see the need to try to understand these two approaches in terms of their theoretical implications and in the framework of their respective historical contexts.

Heidegger's evaluation of Humanism reveals that he held to a very traditional interpretation of that movement. When we speak here of a traditional interpretation, two noted scholars come to mind as representatives of such a view. Ernst Cassirer began with the misleading assumption that Humanism exhibits signs of the beginning of modern epistemology. With this in mind, he examined it in terms of epistemological problems and offered his evaluation of it on that basis. Paul Oskar Kristeller, on the other hand, sees the philosophical significance of Humanism primarily in its Platonic and Neo-Platonic systems. These views permit such questions as the relationship between *res* and *verba*, the philosophical importance of poetry, or the importance of rhetoric to fall into the background.

The traditional interpretation of Humanism, either as a new affirmation of man and, therefore, as an anthropology involving particular epistemological problems, or as a renewal of Platonism or Neo-Platonism and so of Western metaphysics, is what led Heidegger to his negative judgment about the philosophical importance of that tradition. In his *Letter on Humanism* Heidegger states:

"Humanism does *not* ask about *Being's relationship to man* and his essential nature. Humanism even hinders asking this question because, *on the basis of its own origins in metaphysics*, it neither recognizes nor understands this question."[1] This quotation seems to indicate that Heidegger understood "Humanism" to be only a superficial rediscovery of man, a Humanism in which, for example, the essence and function of poetry play no fundamental role. This view overlooks all those questions that Mussato and others discussed from the end of the thirteenth century until the end of the fifteenth century. It overlooks the chief questions that concerned Boccaccio, Salutati, Landino, Pontano, and other Humanists.

Three questions must be raised about Humanism and Heidegger's thesis of the primacy of poetry. (1) Wherein does the actual essence of Italian Humanism consist? (2) Did the actual philosophical significance of Italian Humanism remain hidden for Heidegger because he was familiar only with the widespread traditional interpretation? Considered by itself, discussion of this basically historical question can hardly serve to further a discussion of the essential issues themselves. But it leads us to a third, fundamental, theoretical question that can permit us to answer the first two questions. I mean, (3) What approach to the problem provides a key to the thesis, upheld by both Heidegger and the Humanists, that poetry is primary and has a philosophical function? In order to answer this question, it is especially important to consider first Heidegger's concept of Existentialism. That requires, most of all, that we leave behind the usual understanding of Existentialism as we know it through Sartre, Merleau-Ponty, or Camus.

To this end I want to refer first to a theoretical discussion that Heidegger presented in 1941 in a lecture course entitled *Grundbegriffe* (Basic Concepts). Of these lectures, the last part has been printed in *Holzwege* in a revised version entitled "Der Spruch des Anaximanders."[2] I want to begin by setting out the argument put forth in that lecture, but only to expand upon the theoretical and historical problems that concern us here. Heidegger explains the essential difference between Being (*Sein*) and beings (*Seiendes*). This is what is referred to as the "ontological difference." He demonstrates

this essential difference by pointing out the impossibility of speaking about Being (*Sein*) in the form of a being (*Seiendes*) (in the sense of some object). Every attempt to define Being in this way leads to contradictions.

An initial definition of Being, Heidegger observes, must maintain that Being is that which is most "empty" since it is predicated of all beings and, hence, is what is most common to all things. The Being of each being is asserted with the verb "is." We say of a stone that it "is," of an animal, of a house, and of an attitude that it "is." Only by virtue of such an "emptiness" is it possible for us to find Being in everything that is. Being does without any particular distinction in order to appear within every being. In contradiction to this initial definition of Being as empty and common to everything, we are also forced to recognize that Being can be defined in the opposite way, that is, as "singular and one." For we are concerned only with the "Being" of all the many different things that are. Each such thing is to be understood in terms of "Being." Hence, instead of characterizing Being as common the way we did before, Being is also the opposite of this, namely singular, because Being is everywhere, among beings, "the same."

A second definition of Being, according to Heidegger, purports that Being is "what is most understandable" of all to us because it is only upon the basis of Being that beings can be conceived of or spoken about at all. Wherever and whenever beings are experienced, we also take account of Being because Being is connected with our understanding of beings everywhere and at every moment. In this way Being proves to be what is most readily understood. But here too we are faced with a contradiction because we must confront this definition with the fact that Being is also what is "most hidden or concealed" (*das Verborgenste*). Every attempt to say what Being is forces us to define it as a being among other beings which means that we necessarily fail to say what it is *as* Being. Being remains hidden as Being and this "staying hidden" belongs to Being itself.

Heidegger's third definition of Being is directed to the insight that Being is what can be "most relied upon" (*das Verlässlichte*). For

how are we even to doubt particular beings in any way, if it is not already certain that we can rely on what it means to be? We refer most frequently to Being since it is named in every noun, adjective, and verb. This expression of what is, is not an expression of agreement (*Zu-sage*) to each particular situation, but rather something that "must already be given before" (*Vorgabe*) because it is only by virtue of this expression that it is possible to name beings.

This definition of Being is also connected to the opposite insight that Being is what is most abysmal (*das Abgründigste*) and as such is "what is least of all reliable" (*das Unverlässlichste*). Every attempt to define Being—and so to logically fixate it—fails. Being, therefore, does not stand firmly as something upon which we can build. Moreover, Being is what is "most silent" (*das Verschwiegenste*). Every assertion about Being goes astray because, by the very process of assertion, Being is relegated to the status of "a being." This going astray is unavoidable. On the other hand, Being is what is "most often expressed" in language since, in every assertion about beings, Being is also spoken about. It is therefore the word that breaks the silence.

According to Heidegger's fifth definition of Being, it is what has been "most of all forgotten," because the questions that man has raised are directed to beings and not to Being, that is, they are directed to nature, man, and all of those things that affect us directly and urge themselves upon us. But even this definition is contradicted insofar as Being is actually that which is "most of all remembered." For if Being were completely eradicated from our recollection, then beings could neither be met with nor asserted as Being. That urgent necessity that we meet with in the experience of things is rooted in the claim that Being makes upon us (in language: *Anspruch des Seins*).

Finally, Being turns out to be involved in one last contradiction, for it proves to be simultaneously "what is most necessitating" (*Nötigendste*) as well as what is "most liberating" (*Befreiendste*); it is only by virtue of the claim of Being (*Anspruch*) that the Being of beings is revealed. Since the subject and object are both beings,

they therefore confront each other only through the liberation of Being, that is, through the freedom of Being. More specifically, man comes to himself as a subject in relationship to an object through the liberating action of Being.

The Original Realm of the Non-logical

THE COURSE OF HEIDEGGER'S THOUGHT which we have sketched has certain difficulties in itself, no matter from whom it stemmed. It is the result of a "logical" analysis, not an intellectual game. This analysis "debars" (*verwehrt*) us from saying anything logically definite about the verb "is," such as giving a definition. Instead, it indicates or refers us to the way Being has power over language. We find two particular areas in which the essence and structure of the verb "is" and its relationship to particular beings could be discussed as problems. The Greek term for "verb" is ῥῆμα and that towards which it is directed, the noun, is called ὄνομα, which designates each different kind of being. Since ὄνομα and ῥῆμα, noun and verb, constitute the basic elements of language, it would seem that a discussion of the verb "is" is a task for grammar. But the Being contained in the word "is" obviously belongs to the field of philosophy, since it goes "beyond" the formal rules of language and is prior to them. We must grant that when "is" has to be expressed along with every being, this fact indicates that Being itself constantly pushes its way into language. The definition of Being itself, however, falls outside the framework of a grammatical analysis of language.

The same limitation applies to logic. Logic is concerned with the connection (συμπλοκή) of subject and object and the "foundation" for this connection. But since logic's operations begin by presupposing existing beings, i. e.,subject and object, it proves from the outset to be incapable of posing "the question of Being," let alone of developing and answering it. If we presuppose the identity of Being and beings, then logic and its problem of truth become primary. The philosophical question is then necessarily restricted to interpreting the relationship between subject and object, con-

ceived "in terms of beings." This means that the question of the relationship between *res* and *verba* arises only in the context of logical thought and language, with the result that every other form of speaking, such as rhetorical speech, can be rejected as unsuitable for science.

However, if philosophy is to have a new task, we must overcome this view, for it is based upon conceiving our relationship to beings as the first and highest one. This was the way of thought usually found in metaphysics, which deduced the real from this relationship. We must prove that this view neither poses nor solves the problem of "Being." The ontological difference between Being and beings discussed above offers this proof. Traditional metaphysics takes as its starting point, the thesis of a relationship to a first, original "being" defined as the highest. This leads to a pure formalism as soon as someone demonstrates—just as Analytic philosophy has done—that no such starting point from a "first" being can possess universal validity or necessity (since all are "underived"). Hence, no metaphysics is possible. The task for thought today consists in delimiting the area in which "Being" originally has presence (*anwest*) with *Dasein*. But then it is necessary to begin with the ontological difference between Being and beings. Such a plan entails seeing *Dasein* in the light of the power of original Being, in that light in which *Dasein*'s being-in-the-world is first revealed and realized. This would justify philosophy's essential claim to be directed no longer to "logical truth," but to "unconcealedness" (*Unverborgenheit*). This means recognizing that logical proof no longer stands as the highest criterion of knowledge.

In his essay "The End of Philosophy," Heidegger refers to the passage in the *Metaphysics* where Aristotle presents the thesis that we must know what we can prove and what we cannot prove:[3] "For it has yet to be decided in which way those things that require no proof are *to be experienced* in order to be accessible for thought. . . . The task of thought must then be to give up previous thought about the definition of thought."[4]

A further essential point must be raised here. It was pointed out

above that every attempt to define logically, that is, to "grasp" the verb "is," leads to contradiction. The realm where the verb "is" has its roots and can be expressed in language—that verb in which the power of Being is expressed—"is not the realm of logic." However, the arguments that Heidegger presents in order to prove that Being is never to be defined as a being all concentrate upon recognition of the fact that every assertion about a being presupposes that this being has been "fixed," that it has an identity. Hence, the realm of beings proves to be subject to the three traditional principles of logic: identity, non-contradiction, and excluded middle. But since Being cannot be fixed or held, it does not fall under these principles of logic which show themselves to be the conditions delimiting the sphere of beings. This means that the problem of truth can no longer be considered to have primacy and is replaced by the question of "unconcealedness," non-logical *Lichtung* (to appear in a "clearing").

For this reason Heidegger stresses again and again that his translation of the Greek term ἀλήθεια stems principally from a theoretical consideration and not from a philosophical interpretation:

> When I persist in translating ἀλήθεια as unconcealedness, this is not out of reverence for etymology but is due rather to that which we must pay attention if we are to think in a way that accords with what we call Being and thought. Ἀλήθεια is of course named at the beginning of philosophy, but after that it was not thought of as much by philosophy in a way that was proper to it. For the object of philosophy as metaphysics, since Aristotle, is to think of beings as such in ontological terms.[5]

Logical thought and the logical form of language that goes along with it, which "debars" (*verwehrt*) us from making a statement about Being, refers us at the same time to language that does not offer proof, but rather takes things from concealment (*entbirgt*). This original form of language has two essential characteristics which we can deduce from the foregoing discussion of the derivative

character of rational, mediating language. These characteristics are "immediateness" and—since this means presence to our senses—an "imagistic character." This "imagism" is always "directive." This is the only way that what is underived becomes evident and is effective.

A question of principal importance arises for Heidegger at this point. Are we actually to understand (the thesis found in Heidegger and in Italian Humanism) that poetic, imagistic language is primary in such a way that Being itself is thought to make itself known to us primarily in the immediate, imagistic nature of the poetic? In order to illuminate this problem in an introductory manner, I want to refer again to G. B. Vico, whose thought I consider the culmination of the Humanist tradition. Vico assumed a polemical stance towards metaphysics, which proposes to derive the meaning of reality from first principles by using purely rational methods. Vico proclaimed that poetic language was primary and sharply criticized the claim that logical language was the guide of thought:

> We find that the principle of these origins both of languages and of letters lies in the fact that the early gentile peoples, by a demonstrated necessity of nature, were poets who spoke in poetic characters. . . . The [poetic] characters of which we speak are found to have been certain imaginative genera [*universali fantastici*] to which they reduced all the species or all the particulars appertaining to each genus.[6]

The poetic characters or universals created by imagination are the "exemplary images" or "ideal portraits" to which we trace the individual species of beings and in which the manifold of beings comes into the open (*sich lichtet*).

Vico's thesis of the primacy of poetry and "imaginative universals" is based upon two central insights: first, that these "universals" are not derived from particular beings as their abstractions and, second, that (as Vico suggests by his reference to the effective power of the images created by imagination which accord with different particular times) beings emerge from the directive rule of Being.

In this way Vico implicitly establishes the distinction between Being and beings and directs us to the question of Being's power to refer found in imagistic thought. In other words, Being's demands are originally shown through imagination and the image, and they urge themselves upon us through a poetic projection. The poet is the first to experience the original demands of Being; no world has ever been founded by a rational metaphysics.

For Vico, guiding images, in whose light beings appear, announce the original power of Being. His thesis of the primacy of imagination as the "eye" of *ingenium* stresses once more the original sphere of Being's self-revelation in Being-there (*Dasein*), the sphere in which beings make their appearance. Vico's concern is the primacy of *ingenium* and imagination over logical inference. In other words, Vico's concern is not just a mere anthropological capacity, for which Heidegger attacks Humanism. With Vico's theses we are far removed from the interpretation of poetry found in German Idealism where Kant, for example, denies that it has any philosophical function or significance. For Kant, poetry "plays with appearances according to its own whims . . . for it considers its own activity to be a mere game."[7] The same, individual, anthropological interpretation of the function of poetry and imagination, i.e., fantasy, can also be found in Schopenhauer when he writes:

> Because the reader's fantasy is the material in which the art of poetry presents its images, this has the advantage that the completion of the finer details takes place in the individual's fantasy in a way that is most appropriate to his own character, knowledge, and mood.[8]

A completely different evaluation and a clear consciousness of this problem is found in a letter that Hamann wrote in 1759 to Kant:

> Our projections possess eternity. This may not be found in ideas and cannot be sought nor contained there, but only in the power and the mind to which these ideas themselves are subject.[9]

A final comment. Being is present (*west*) in each particular verb, "was," "is," or "will be." This temporal dimension is needed for beings to become accessible to us within the historicity of language. If, however, we continue to uphold a temporal statement, that is, if we make it a dogma because we believe that this permits us to grasp Being, we thereby falsify Being by degrading it to a being. Then we are faced with the "forgetfulness of Being." As a result, every attempt to firmly establish Being once and for all in an institution, be it religious, social, or scientific in nature, must result in a mystification of Being.

The Realm of Logic: The Principle of Sufficient Reason

THE ABOVE DISCUSSION of Heidegger's basic argument served to explain the ontological difference between Being and beings. To determine whether Heidegger's main emphasis in fact lies in this thesis I want to interpret one of his texts, *Der Satz Vom Grund* (*The Principle of Sufficient Reason*).

The task will be to check whether and to what extent the ontological difference makes understandable not only the theoretical implications of theses about the primacy of poetic language, but also the equivalent claim in Italian Humanism. Before turning to the interpretation of Heidegger's text, an introductory remark may be helpful. In Heidegger's writings there are expressions that strike us as odd and somewhat strange because we are used to traditional, rational, philosophical terminology. He speaks of "unconcealedness" (*Unverborgenheit*), of "a clearing" (*Lichtung*) of beings as the task of a coming philosophy, and of the destiny of Being (*Geschick des Seins*). Man is therefore called "destined" (*ein Beschickter*). That means man has become engaged by (*beansprucht*) the claim (*Anspruch*) of Being and granted a place in time and space. In this way man attains the possibility of building upon a "clearing" in Being and fulfilling his own proper tasks.[10]. Heidegger's terminology has often been described as "mannerist," "rhetorical," or "artificial," but these accusa-

tions overlook the fact that this is the only terminology that is appropriate to a philosophy that begins with the experience of Being. The goal that Heidegger set himself in his essay *Der Satz vom Grund* was to show that the traditional interpretation of the principle of sufficient reason became the fate of Western thought. From this insight Heidegger arrives at his categorical thesis about the end of philosophy.

The principle of sufficient reason states: "nihil est sine ratione," nothing is without a reason. The affirmative form states: "Everything has a reason." According to tradition, the meaning of this is to be understood in the following manner. Every statement about nature, about man, about art, and so forth only proves to be justified and scientific if we are able "to give the reason for it," that is, if we can give a reason that explains it. Otherwise, our statements remain in the sphere of opinions (δόξα), so that they are limited to what things seem like to each of us, in other words, the merely subjective and relative. They do not stand in the light of objectivity.

Since every proposition about beings can only be founded by inference to an earlier "reason" and since this activity belongs to *ratio*, we therefore know two things. First, the principle of sufficient reason proves to be the principle of logical thought and speech about "beings." Moreover, we also know that it has the function of "holding" or "fixing" beings in place. Heidegger formulates this thesis by stating that the principle of sufficient reason "secures an object's whole status, in every regard, and for everybody; that is, it brings it to a complete standstill."[11] This means that beings are made to stand before us as objects of a particular kind.

Our understanding of this thesis is as follows. Man finds himself in the midst of a manifold of beings to which he himself also belongs. This manifold of beings proves to be in no way univocal or unified. Beings do not "stand," they fluctuate and "become" different through a variety of possible meanings. As a result, man's first task consists in "establishing" or "grasping" these fluctuating possibilities so that they are finally fixed; this is not only first from a theoretical viewpoint, but also first in order for man to find his way in the world of beings at all, that is, to exist. This "establishing" is accom-

plished by the giving of reasons or grounds

> To represent [*vorstellen*], however, means *repraesentare*, to make something *present* now to man. But now . . . man is experienced as the ego that is related to the world so that it places this before itself in correctly connected representations [*Vorstellungen*] or judgments and in this way sets it off from itself as an object.[12]

Both subjects and objects are to be included under the manifold of firmly fixed (*fest-gestellt*) beings. This makes it understandable that in traditional philosophy, which begins with the problem of beings, primacy was always given from the beginning to the question of the relationship between subject and object, i.e., to the question of logical truth, the correspondence (*adaequatio*) of the subject to the object. This problem became the main question of traditional philosophy and metaphysics. Heidegger says: "Judgments and propositions are correct, i. e., true, only when the reason or ground for the connection between subject and predicate are placed before the imagining subject and directed back towards these."[13]

An important conclusion results from this insight of Heidegger's. If the principle of sufficient reason secures beings and permits them to appear as something specific, then this principle proves to be the presupposition of all calculated behavior. As a matter of fact, if the principle of sufficient reason makes beings "stand" or puts them in place, it thereby serves to "identify" them as this or that. If this occurs, then we exclude the possibility that the beings we express could be defined in an opposite or third way. Thus the principle of sufficient reason proves to be the presupposition for the principles of identity, non-contradiction, and the excluded middle. Since these three principles are the pillars supporting logic and logical thought, the principle of sufficient reason proves to be the *highest* principle of logical thought and speech. It opens up the whole area of logic as the science of statements about beings.

Because the principle of sufficient reason makes beings "stand" as something specifically defined, it is also the presupposition of all calculable behavior. In fact, only if a being is firmly held or

grasped, and thereby justified (*be-rechtigt*), can it be explained by calculating its behavior (*be-rechnend*). The principle of sufficient reason is therefore the basic principle of calculability and of *ratio*: "*Ratio* means both accountability [*Rechenschaft*] in the sense of justification [*rechtfertigen*], something which is justifiably so [*zu Recht bestehend*], to correctly calculate something [*richtig errechnen*] and thereby to secure such a calculation."[14]

This leads us to a further essential conclusion about Western thought. If the principle of sufficient reason, as it is interpreted by traditional thought, is the principle of beings, and if Western philosophy is based upon it, then the claim is that this principle is responsible for Western history. It is what founds the primacy of calculability and also of technology in this history, since technology emerges most of all by perfecting the calculation by which objects are secured or fixed. Heidegger claims that modern science, guided by technology, is established by this principle. It is what defines the area in which "science moves, as the fish does in water or the birds in the air."[15]

Heidegger's thesis culminates in the assertion that the age of calculating thought turns into an epoch of world history which he calls the atomic age. He states: "The ground or reason is interpreted as ratio, accountability. Man is the computing [*rechnende*] creature. This holds true in different forms throughout the entire history of Western thought. This thought, as modern European thinking, has brought the world today into the atomic age of the world."[16]

One last thing follows from this. The principle of sufficient reason by which beings are firmly grasped or fixed leads to the primacy of the question of *why?* and its subordinate questions about beings, *how?*, *when?*, and *where?* But because the principle of sufficient reason holds for "beings," man is prevented from obtaining any definite answer at this level since, by giving a reason, he is always referred only from one being to another. This raises the question whether it is not possible and necessary for there to be a more basic and original question than "why?" If the principle of sufficient reason should contain another, more fundamental, in-

terpretation, then, in that case, the question of "why?" would lose its primary importance. This would mean that the primacy of logic and man's calculating attitude towards beings would then lose its position of domination. If this calculating and purely rational attitude, about which Western culture is so proud, were called into question, then a new inroad to understanding foreign cultures that do not have this basic attitude would result. Here I am thinking of Far Eastern cultures whose relationship to things is imagistic and metaphorical.

The Claim of Being. The Principle of Sufficient Reason as a Principle of Being

To SUMMARIZE, in the light of its traditional interpretation, the principle of sufficient reason has to do with beings and brings them to a standstill. Giving an account of beings is what, in Heidegger's view, makes possible calculation about beings and the ability to have them at one's disposal for various uses. The principle of sufficient reason, as a principle concerning beings, points to the question "why?" and forces us to return to "beings" for the answer. So, as we have already noted, the answer depends on a constant reference from one being to another. Is there a more original and fundamental way to think than in this rational way that is preoccupied with giving reasons? Is it that form of thinking that Heidegger terms "thought that considers" (*besinnliches Denken*)?[17]

In the second part of *Der Satz vom Grund*, Heidegger explains the necessity of understanding this principle in a more fundamental way than has been traditionally undertaken, namely as the principle of Being (*Satz vom Sein*). This basic thesis contains the following train of thought. Through the insight that all beings stand under the claim of Being, Being itself proves to be "the last and final ground or reason." With this, we are forced to recognize and conceive the identity of Being and ground or reason as what "grounds" (*Gründende*). We must recognize this identity as the original mean-

ing of the statement: "Nihil est sine ratione." The principle of sufficient reason, Heidegger says,

> can no longer want to say: Being has a reason. If we understand the word of being in that sense, then we would have conceived of Being as a being. Only beings have a reason and they do so by necessity. It is only *as* something *grounded*. Being, however, because it is itself the ground, remains *without a ground*. Insofar as Being grounds even the ground, it lets beings always remain beings.[18]

Heidegger points out that traditional metaphysics regards the principle of sufficient reason exclusively as a principle of "beings" and, because it stops with this interpretation, misplaces and misrepresents its view of the problem of "Being":

> Because Leibniz and all metaphysics stops with the principle of sufficient reason as a principle about *beings*, metaphysical thought demands, according to basic principle, a first reason for Being, in a being, namely in the one that is most of all a being.[19]

Far-reaching conclusions follow from this. First, because Being cannot be given a reason or ground, the principle of sufficient reason as the principle of Being rests on an "abyss" (*Abgrund*), as Heidegger calls it. The sphere of Being is inaccessible to logic. Being is at home in contradiction; it simultaneously offers a reason or ground for things and none an abyss. Furthermore, we see that Being confronts man in his need to define beings in his experience of urgent claims, and this confrontation and these demands emerge in language. Heidegger points out that "words and language are not wrappings in which things are packed for the commerce of those who write or speak. It is in words and language that things first come into being and are."[20]

If one begins with the question of beings, then man's main problem will be to attain the usage and control of beings. This is the Western attitude. One thereby forgets the question of Being. The

pursuit of beings covers and conceals the original question of the appearance of Being and the fundamental experiences bound up with it.

> The destiny of Being is the permission [*Zuspruch*] and claim [*Anspruch*] of language, out of which all human speech speaks. Saying [*Spruch*] in Latin is *fatum*. But *fatum* as the saying of Being is in the sense of the withdrawing destiny, nothing fatalistic for the simple reason that it can never be the same. Why not? Because Being, by sending itself provides the freedom in temporal and spatial free-play and at the same time is the first liberation of man, giving him the freedom of his particular essential possibility.[21]

This experience, that Being's power confronts us in a non-rational, immediate, non-deducible, "fantastic," "imagistic," language (in the sense of "appearing" or φαίνεσθαι), leads us to the insight that it is such language that determines our fate in each particular case. This determination can also take place through mute gestures, for what Being's gestures are can only be understood by what they hold or "carry" and that which is brought to us is the claim of Being. "Holy" gestures are recognized as "holy" by their directive or referring function as signs. In the end, it is not the word, that is, language, that creates the "clearing" or un-concealedness, but rather the "sign."

Two other essential elements in the experience of Being should be considered. First is the fact that beings which emerge in the light of Being through language are both brought to unconcealedness and also are concealed by language at the same time. Being always reveals itself in the *velamen* or veil of the word that expresses beings. Since Being is never identical with the particular beings themselves, it therefore both "reveals" and "conceals" itself in beings in which "here" and "now" are delimited in the historical word. As Heidegger says:

> Rather, it lies in the essence of being that self-revelation occurs in such a way that to this self-revelation belongs self-

> concealment. This is said in Heraclitus' saying that we number as fragment 123: "φύσις κρύπτεσθαι φιλεῖ," "To revealing also belongs a concealing." Being as a sending to itself that opens up [*lichtendes Sichzuschicken*] is also a withdrawal.[22]

Second, with this knowledge of the original realm of Being in whose course (*Bezug*) beings are revealed in their particular forms, we have left behind the area defined by the question "why?" With this, the difference between Being and beings occurs in an area in which the category "because" is decisive. The field of the "because" constrains us from seeking for reasons. It refuses any giving of reasons or foundations. For "because" is without "why," has no reason, is itself a ground.[23]

Heidegger's thesis that original, pre-Socratic philosophy was obstructed by the primacy of the problem of logical truth in the Platonic Socrates can also be found in Nietzsche's *The Birth of Tragedy* and *The Philosophy of the Tragic Age of the Greeks*. In these works Nietzsche tries, as he says himself, to liberate the stricken heads of the Germans from a priori deductive metaphysics, from that philosophy that he terms a "scholarly monologue of the lonely wanderer" or as the "hidden secret studies of academic elderly men and children." He says: "With Plato something new begins, or as we might just as well say, since Plato something essential has been missing from philosophy, in comparison with that ingenious republic from Thales to Socrates."[24] In the pre-Socratic age, Nietzsche claims, Apollo had primacy: "Apollo, whose root is the 'shining one,' the light god, also rules the beautiful appearances of the inner fantasy world,"[25] here referring to that world of fantasy with which the arts appear and "through which life is made posssible and lovable."[26]

Within the Humanistic tradition G. B. Vico already presented the thesis of the philosophical importance of original pre-Socratic thought, a thesis that he developed in *De antiquissima Italorum sapientia* in his polemics against Descartes' a priori, rationalistic metaphysics. By the ancient wisdom of the "Italian philosophers," Vico meant the thinkers of Magna Graecia, not, as has been er-

roneously claimed, "a people that he thought up and that never existed as an Italian people." But not until Heidegger posed the problem of the ontological difference do we find the theses of Nietzsche and Vico receiving their proper, basic philosophical consideration or showing their theoretical and historical foundation.

III

The Humanist Tradition

Heidegger's Anti-Humanistic Attitude

THE FOREGOING FUNDAMENTAL DISCUSSION of Heidegger provides two essential historical considerations that he formulated in a programmatic, polemical form. The first conclusion states that traditional Western metaphysics, insofar as it proceeded from the principle of sufficient reason and so from a rational philosophy, has come to an end. The death of philosophy in the present age is simply the final outcome of this rationalistic metaphysics. The second essential conclusion is that every attempt to philosophize at a fundamental level must be anti-humanistic since such thinking begins with the question of man and so proves to be an anthropology. But such an approach cannot offer a way to the original question of the experience of Being, which means that a humanistic approach is doomed to fail here from the outset.

While we cannot enter here into Heidegger's first historical thesis, his global judgement about Western metaphysics, we do want to discuss the second one. We repeat our question: Are his judgement and condemnation of Humanism justified? Does the problem of Being's claims upon us occur in Humanism in place of the problem of the rational foundation of beings? Is the problem of the claim of Being discussed in Humanism in the sphere of the poetic so that the original function of poetic language is not only fully but more deeply recognized, as it is in Heidegger? In order to answer these questions it will be necessary to reconsider briefly Heidegger's anti-Humanistic attitude and the reasons that led him to take up such an attitude. I am referring here again to Heidegger's *Letter on Humanism*, which I was the first to publish, in 1947.[1]

Jean Beaufret, to whom Heidegger wrote his letter, had written

Heidegger asking whether, and how, one could still find meaning in the term "Humanism." In reply, Heidegger began by posing the contrary question of whether it makes any sense to discuss the validity of all such titles that end in "isms." For Heidegger, the term "Humanism" puts the accent upon man as the beginning of philosophizing, and this in itself already serves to erect a wall that keeps us from original thinking. Heidegger points out that the term "Humanism" first emerged during the Roman republic, where it was identified with the Latin version of Greek παιδεία.

It is a given for Heidegger that every Humanism begins with a definition of the essence of man and so with an anthropological philosophy. It must be emphasized in this connection that the common definition of Humanism, especially as a rebirth of ancient culture or Greek civilization, is basically a philological and historical movement that hardly could have any philosophical importance and then only in an anthropological sense. This definition of Humanism is the kind that has been accepted since the end of the last century; it is, in my view, what obscures the specifically philosophical essence of the humanistic tradition. In the *Letter on Humanism* we find the following fundamental statement: "Man must, before he speaks, let himself first be claimed again by Being at the risk of having under this claim little or nothing to say. Only in this way will the preconsciousness of the essence of Being be returned to the word, and to man the dwelling where he can live in the truth of Being."[2]

What does Heidegger mean with this being "claimed by Being" (*Anspruch des Seins*)? Is it a romantic formulation as it has sometimes been interpreted? This passage holds the key to Heidegger's theoretical view of Humanism and his assertion that the problem of Being has primacy. We must remember that man always has held fast to beings, Heidegger emphasizes, and that Being is closer to man than beings, "be it a rock, an animal, a work of art, a machine, be it an angel or God. Being is the closest. Yet its closeness remains farthest from man."[3] If we do not primarily raise the question of how Being concerns man and the way it makes a claim upon him, then we pass up every opportunity to say something

fundamental about human beings, which is why Heidegger states that Humanism does not attain to the essence of man. "In this the thinking in *Being and Time* runs counter to Humanism . . . because it does not set the *humanitas* of man high enough."[4]

We repeat our twofold question: Is Heidegger's thesis about Humanism correct? Does Humanism provide us, in its interpretation of poetry and poetry's original "revealing," "opening" function, with a discussion of that original area in which Being confronts and makes a claim upon man?

Word and Content: Giovanni Pontano (1426–1503)

IN THE FOREGOING DISCUSSION I have tried to show that rational thought and speech, the starting point in traditional Western metaphysics, is the measure by which man regards beings and establishes the goal of securing a grasp of them. The problem of the clearing (*Lichtung*) in which beings arise remains untouched by the question of beings. The analysis of the verb "is" has shown that the claim made by Being is present in every statement about beings. Moreover, the analysis of the principle of sufficient reason brought us to the insight that logical speech refers us to a more original, "imagistic" form of language which is at home in the sphere of logical contradiction. Heidegger's thesis of the primacy of poetry is only understandable if we keep this context in mind.

In turning now to Italian Humanism's thesis that poetry has a leading role, our primary object is to answer the question of how and with what consequences did the Humanists regard the relationship of thing and word (*res* and *verba*) in the realm of poetry. The fact that the philosophical thinking of the Humanists took place in the context of poetry rather than of traditional metaphysical questions means that a major task will be to revise the traditional view of Humanism. Hence, we must recognize that the emergence of Platonic and Neo-Platonic philosophy (Ficino) and, later, of Aristotelian thought, actually breaks with the Humanist tradition, and the philosophy of the Renaissance begins. This turn, however,

signifies nothing other than the return to traditional metaphysical thought.

As a necessary comment about method, I should point out that in selecting texts I have been concerned to discuss these problems theoretically, not historically. It is not possible here to deal with the historical contexts in which specific problems and controversies arose or in which the Humanists' battles with traditional metaphysics took place; that would lead beyond the limits of this investigation.[5]

My first example of the Humanist discussion of the primacy of poetry is Giovanni Pontano's *Dialogi*.[6] In these dialogues, Pontano carefully examines several different problems. In "Aegidius" he discusses the essence of rhetoric; in "Actius" and "Antonius," the nature of poetry; further, in both "Aegidius" and "Actius," he also examines history and philology. The author slowly frees himself from the traditional thought of his time which narrowly defined the limits in which he could move. Pontano comes to propose the following thesis: There is no greater human capacity for power than that of the word. The essence of the word is the most basic problem. Pontano discusses it at different levels, but always as the question of the relationship between *res* and *verba*.

At the first level of his discussion, the author remains within the theological tradition by referring to the Old Testament: "The creation itself . . . results from the word of God" ("creationem ipsam provenisse . . . ex verbo dei"); and he particularly stresses that "nothing exists at all besides the word which was God himself" ("nihil existeret omnino aliud praeterquam verbum, quod ipsum Deus quidem erat").[7] If God is conceived, in accordance with Jewish and Christian tradition, as the highest being, including all the logical characteristics that he has as the "highest being" (from which the characteristics of other beings are then derived), then the creation which takes place through the word alone is one of *creatio ex nihilo*. Pontano does not, however, enter into this particular question, but concentrates instead on the problem of the relationship between thing and word which he discusses in terms of matter and form.

According to the Aristotelian tradition, the three phases of

beings—their rise, endurance, and decay—presuppose a kind of stuff or matter which takes on different forms and so explains becoming. In order to explicate this thesis, the tradition refers to artistic production as an example. Pontano, however, argues that in the "original" word we cannot distinguish between form and matter, for the simple reason that the word is original. If there were a division, that would mean that the word was something external and not an original reality. According to Pontano: "In the divine expression 'let there be' both matter and form are contained. . . . How is it then surprising . . . that in every word of God form and matter are simultaneously contained?" ("In divino illo edicto 'fiat' et materiam et formam . . . quid mirum . . . in verbo illo Dei inesse simul et materiam et formam").[8] That means, Pontano claims, that there is a unity of matter and the word.

Pontano proposes an analogous thesis with regard to the New Testament. Whereas Pontano's first step is directed to the appearance of beings through and in the divine Word, his second thesis concerns the liberation of man through the divine Word's incarnation in Christ. He is the one who perfects the unity of word and thing with the aim of the perfection of man ("ut divinum verbum illud, cum a Deo esset, et homo idem fieret et nihilominus Deus esset").[9] This theological line of argument breaks off abruptly and, at first, quite surprisingly. It is followed by the discussion of a purely philological problem whose relationship to the original question is not immediately apparent. The problem is the philological distinction between *carens* and *privatum*. Pontano explains in his comments on the subject that *privatio* stems from *privare* and signifies that which belongs to someone as his own ("significat quod est suum cuiusque ac proprium").[10] The concept *privatum* is not interpreted here in a negative sense, but rather points to that which is strictly itself. *Carens*, on the other hand, points to a lack which calls for something that is missing.

Behind this seemingly purely philological discussion stands the following problem. In the scholastic tradition, the word is generally understood as the pure *vox* that "belongs" to the "object," which is itself explicated in purely logical terms. Those variants of lan-

guage that are bound to time and place as a way of defining the object appear, in this view, to be inessential. Pontano opposes this traditional interpretation by posing the question: Is an "object," insofar as it is separated from the word, something self-sufficient (*privatum*) or something needing (*carens*) the word? In the latter case, the "matter" would have a fundamental need for expression ("materiam ipsam quidem expositam esse ac paratam ad induendam sese forma qua ipsa penitus careat").[11]

Pontano continues by indicating that we must attribute the *carentia* of the word to the object or matter. The "object" and the "word" are united in the closest possible way: "matter needs the form, it desires it by virtue of its innermost nature" ("carens cum materia indigeat forma quam suapte natura cupiat sibi inesse").[12] Pontano interprets the problem of form and matter in language by reference to his thesis that the *res* appears historically through *verba*.

The Word Stands in Wonder of the Object

WAS PONTANO REALLY SUCCESSFUL in liberating himself from the traditional interpretation of the relationship between form and matter? He pursued this problem by giving special attention to poetry. His fundamental position takes the experience of wonder at creativity as its starting point, the wonder that takes possession of the poet during the creation of his work. For in the context of this wonder, Pontano explains, the "object" or "reality" appears with complete concrete presence. It is neither derived from beings that are already there nor from some rational truth. For Pontano, poetry is as such an original process of "uncovering." He formulates this thesis in an explicit polemic attack on the grammarians.

In his "Antonius," Pontano complains about the state of thought during his time in order to focus his criticism on the grammarians. He says: "If we cast an eye at their writings, nothing more unartistic, nothing more incongruous, nothing duller could be seen" ("nihil inertius, nihil inconcinnius, nihil oscitatius videas").[13] In another place Pontano attacks the influential grammarian Favorinus

and suggests that he should return to philosophy where the syllogism reigns supreme: "But as far as the poem is concerned . . . leave that to the poets" ("et quid carmini conveniat . . . iudicandum pensitandumque poetis ipsis relinque").[14]

The task of the poet is not to report information or to explain, but rather to let beings appear in the light of "wonder" by means of the poetic word. Pontano illustrates this task by means of a passage from the *Aeneid* where the poet describes Mount Aetna:

> Vergil himself makes clear that the nature of the mountain Aetna did not serve as a model to him" ["montis naturam id consilii non fuisse sibi"][15]. . . . So he does not take it and describe it as some particular kind of matter [ut vellet pro assumpta et quodammodo destinata materia describere] . . ., not does he try to discover the causes of things [nec rei causas exquirit]. . . . When he began to describe Aeneas' landing . . ., he added the most wonderful and remarkable things, things that Aeneas himself was reminded of, so that he turned from the description of this harbor to the wonder of this thing itself [rei ipsius miraculo adverteretur].[16]

Pontano states explicitly: poetic language reveals (*explicat*) a world by means of admiration (*admiratio*), which is able to elicit a sympathetic feeling from all the other senses: "Do you see the clever intention of the artistic poet, because from the beginning of his story he reveals something so wondrous to us that even he himself is taken by it?" ("quod in admirabili re enarranda tractum se admiratione ipsa ab initio statim ostendit").[17] The *commotio* which comes from this *admiratio* is what makes it possible for a human being to emerge as an individual. The things that appear do so in the light of a *concussio* and a *consternatio* which excite the senses and the mind: "A shudder comes over us which does not fail to shake our organs and baffle our mind" ("membrorum concussione animique costernatione").[18] All the senses are seized by *admiratio* for that which appears (*apparere*) through them:

> After he [Vergil] had enough with the sense of hearing

> [through his description] he turned to that of vision . . . in order to make the object still more wonderful since usually more is made obvious to us through vision than through hearing [per hunc sensum rem admirabiliorem redderet, quod videndo quam audiendo apparere plura soleant].[19]

The wondrous or admirable seems different to different people in different situations, however. It is always a revelation of that which is individual, that which is inaccessible to rational thought. Because the reality that is revealed in this manner does not match reality as it is already found—as it does in the case of a geographical, scientific, or historical description—it suddenly stands before us in its original meaning as a *miraculum*.

As the sources of poetry, the shudder and admiration that we feel let beings appear to us in a way that "is like the way the object itself is made" ("ut quali res ipsa esset exprimeret").[20] Hence, the poetic word is in no way something subjective or arbitrary, but rather, as Pontano himself says, "inherent in the things themselves" ("rebus ipsis inhaerens").[21] He is not referring here to any kind of physical similarity with things, "for the poet does not make any use of this kind of similarity" ("at noster nulla huiusmodi similitudine usus").[22] *Inhaerentia* refers here to the experience of the *miraculum* that arises from the *commotio*. Pontano's text emphasizes these points: "Vergil himself takes over everything that he must *not* say or show from *somewhere else*, as far as the matter and explanations of things are concerned" ("suscepta explicatione a rebus ipsis, *non aliunde* sibi dicenda atque ostendenda assumit").[23] For the poet the concern is always "to impress the hearts of the audience more and more by the wonder of the object" ("utque audientium animos magis a rei miraculo afficeret").[24]

The thing itself is revealed in and through the word; the *res* is given form in song ("velletque rem ipsam ut admirabilem, ut horroris plenam verbis suis ante oculos ponere animisque infigere ac tubae suae canorem tenere").[25] It is said that what is important for the future must be rescued from oblivion. Pontano therefore claims in a reference to Homer that that poet "had ignited the lights for

posterity" ("lumen accendisset").[26] Pontano never tires of pointing out that the *consilium*, the intention, we have in showing something can always differ and that it is therefore not permissible to speak of an object "existing in itself"in abstract identity: "He [Antonius] said that in doing or describing similar things, we do not always have the same intentions in acting or writing, nor do people everywhere strive with the same thing after the same goal" ("nec eundem ad finem eadem in re ubique contendi").[27]

Poetry, Pontano claims, possesses exclusively a "founding" capacity. It sketches the place and time relationships between people: "Their [the poets'] words and sensations assume the position, power, and authority of laws" ("horum dicta inventaque locum, vim, auctoritatemque legum habere").[28] This founding function of poetry is reconfirmed whenever man, in "horror" at some wondrous new thing, instead of taking flight in fear, fearfully interprets this unheard-of thing with ingenious, inventive fantasy and so conjures up the poetic world. Pontano regards this capacity as the essence of poetry itself. In his continuing polemics against those that he calls "the grammarians," he writes: "If you had read Cicero, you would have learned not only how to speak Latin, but also how to make an important judgement about the genius of writers and their writings" ("de scriptorum ingeniis deque scriptis ipsis sententiam ferre didicisses").[29] What he accuses the grammarians of most of all is their lack of *ingenium* and power of discovery ("nullo ingenio nulla inventione").[30]

The Sacral Claim of Poetry: Albertino Mussato (1261–1329)

LET US ONCE AGAIN RECALL the main steps of the previous discussion. The problem of Being led to the problem of the original, nonrational utterance. Heidegger spoke here of Being's "claim" on us in language (*Anspruch*) which man has to bear (in the sense of *beansprucht*); this original speech "founds" (*stiftet*) a cosmos or order each time. How does this thesis stand in relationship to the traditional assertion that it is not the poet but a god who speaks in

him? Does the definition of the poet as a *vates*, a prophet, a person who predicts, acquire a new meaning in this context or are these attributes only used as a literary metaphor? Our task is to see whether and how Italian Humanism posed these questions and to what historical context its discussion of them is confined.

For this purpose we want to go back to Albertino Mussato, an early Humanist and contemporary of Dante's. He belongs to that circle of Latin poets known as "cenacolo Padovano." Like many of the Humanists, Mussato was a statesman and historian as well as a Latin poet. At Padua in 1315 he was crowned a poet for his tragedy *Ecerinis*. Until today, Mussato has been chiefly judged from the standpoint of the history of literature. One looks in vain for his name in histories of philosophy. Significantly, Mussato's theory of poetry provoked the otherwise unknown preacher, Fra Giovannino of Mantua, to contradict him publicly.

Mussato's letters on the essence of poetry are among the most important early Humanist writings about the philosophical function of poetry. In the following I refer to Epistles IV, VII, and XVIII, where the problems that concern us are treated in the most fundamental way.[31] Mussato's aim is not just to defend poetry but also to illuminate its ability to guide us. Epistle VII is directed against Fra Giovannino. The Dominican friar had written a letter that critically analysed Mussato's thesis step by step and attacked him in particular for having written two obscene priapic poems. These two priapics were repressed by those in charge of the 1636 edition, "in gratiam aurium honestarum."

Fra Giovannino began his letter in verse—Mussato composed his letters on the essence of poetry in verse—but then continued his argument, after four verses, in prose: "I prefer to present my doubts in prose than in meretricious form so that I do not appear, as a doctor, to do injustice to holy theology by binding myself to the rules of poetry."[32] The theologian considers it undignified for his words "to be pressed under the rules of Donatus because," he says, "it is my goal to refute the claim that poetry deserves to be named a divine art" ("quod Poetica merito dici debeat ars divina").[33]

Mussato emphasizes the sacral claim of poetry. He regards poetry

as *divina ars*, *altera philosophia*, and *theologia mundi*; its imagistic, metaphorical way of speaking is opposed to and has primacy over rational thought and logical truth. Early Italian Humanism attempts, almost in desperation, to free itself from traditional metaphysics. It is typical that today Mussato's thesis is regarded mainly as a continuation of an old *topos* (theology and poetry), as if this exhausts the meaning of what he claims. Historians of literature have pointed out that Mussato's theses have a long tradition going back, for example, to Cicero in the Latin tradition.[34] With Isidore of Seville, Cicero's thesis became part of the general theoretical outlook in medieval philosophical thought.[35] But anyone who believes it possible to grasp theoretical theses and their development by a cataloguing of *topoi* obscures the current theoretical importance of the problem that stands behind these *topoi*. So it is not surprising that Humanism is thought to have no philosophical significance and that the true speculative thought of the time appears to be found only in the renewal of Platonism.

We have referred to Mussato's text in terms analogous to those which Coluccio Salutati formulated:

> So it should not seem inappropriate to anyone when we attempt to go beyond what we regard as a tradition [si super his quae tradita cernimus] to the extent that it seems to tempt us from our scholarly attitude, even if the thinkers of this tradition did not think this way [quantum doctrina possit elicere, etiam si illa tradentes hec non senserint].[36]

Salutati justifies this attitude by arguing:

> Our observations and individual sciences would be too dry [nimis etenim arida foret cuiuslibet artis speculatio] if posterity had simply adopted what these had said [adeo simpliciter posteritas recepisset] so that there was nothing in them besides that which their inventors themselves could or would explain [nichil in eis duceret speculandum nisi quod inventores ipsi voluerint declarare].[37]

Let us therefore try to examine Mussato's basic thesis, that poetry is an *ars divina* and a theology of the world ("fuit a primis ars ista theologia mundi"), in a way that goes beyond the traditional interpretation.[38] In one of his letters is found that passionately noble reproach that those who do not recognize the prevailing sacral role of poetry are ignorant of great "ministry" ("grande ministerium nescit, charissime, nescit").[39] By means of claims (*Anspruch*) made upon us by original Being's manifestation in the word—Being that Mussato identifies with God—beings are revealed in the rhythmic, ordered, and, at the same time, ordering power of language. Mussato asserts the thesis, an astonishing one for his time, that the poet has a sacral function that consists in revealing beings completely without regard for what it is that is thereby brought into the clear (*lichtet*).

Giovannino of Mantua conjoined his attack on Mussato's poems (*abhorruisse . . . Priapaiae*) with the argument that these very poems are proof that poetry as such cannot be theology or an *ars divina*. Mussato replies that the fact that he wrote priapic poems cannot be considered an objection to the divine character of poetry. Poetry's claim to be a *theologia mundi* does *not* derive from its having sacral objects in each case, but from its power to reveal beings—which it is also itself—and among beings is also included the obscene. Poetry remains an *ars divina* even when it illuminates a profane object: "Sometimes I tell tales of the holy Minerva / and Venus too is an apt subject for my efforts" ("Interdum sacrae refero monimenta Minervae / incidit officiis atque Venus apta meis").[40]

Mussato does not distinguish, as Boccaccio does later, between good and frivolous or obscene poetry in order thereby to rescue poetry from moralizing critics. For if one were to identify its sacral character with a single manifestation of beings, then its divinity would be equated with that of its particular object. This would result in a mystification of Being, whereas for Mussato Being is identical with God and is constantly expressed in beings. Poetry's concern is not "truth," but rather a temporal revelation of beings including even the particular gods, gods that cannot be equated with the God in whose poetic force they emerge to claim our at-

tention. There is a parallelism between ancient classical and Old Testament expressions: "Divini per saecula prisca poetae / esse caelis edocuere Deum."[41] In the ancient religions it was the god Jupiter who slew the Titans with lightning bolts; in the Old Testament God strikes at man with the bewilderment of language: "Confudit linguas Deus hic, qui fulmina jecit / qui Deus est nobis, Jupiter ille fuit."[42] In Greek religion it is poetically recounted that the gods swore by the river Styx, and Mussato draws an analogy here to the words of Christ that the water of Baptism is the means of life ("in Baptismi nostrae numen consistere vitae").[43] In a similar way he says that the ancient poets imagined that God was "the true and the good in something corporeal, as if he were really in it" ("sumpsere Deum, Deum verumque bonumque in re corporea, tamquam Deus esset in illa").[44]

This context alone is sufficient to make understandable Mussato's claim that "the poets gave the first men the secrets of reality" ("tecta quidem fudere nigmata Genti") and that, because the language of the poets went beyond the beings present at hand, they were called "seers" or *vates* ("Hique alio dici coeperunt nomine vates").[45] Here we find the thesis that Vico will later take up and develop in his *New Science*.

The poet's Muse speaks in images that direct or point; it speaks in suggestive puzzles or "enigmas" ("nigmate majori mystica Musa docet").[46] Mussato terms the words of the poets also "figments." *Figmentum* stems from *fingere*, to form or to shape. The shaping in question here directs us to something further, more original. This is σημαίνειν, language that directs us through something to something else: metaphor. The mind is expanded or stretched by these *figmenta* by being forced to direct its attention to something that goes beyond the words that are immediately used ("Quos magis attentos facit admiranda Poesis quum secus intendit, quam sua verba sonet").[47] But that which exceeds the beings expressed, Being—that which is in control behind and beyond these things—is the *sacrum*, the holy.

The poet is the one who has the key to the essence of the past, the deeds of heroes and kings, times of war and peace. Being is

not to be sought after in the yellowing things of the past—in what arises, subsists a while, and then decays. Thus Mussato comes to his daring statement that he, the poet, is "there" before the ones engaged in struggles whom he sings; only through the poet's work "are" they the heroes with their deeds, with their fame:

> *Through me* Pergama, the fortress of the Dardanian Teucer, was won back; *before* Dardanus was in Troy, *I was* there. The civil wars on the Emathian fields [of Macedonia] and the distinctions of the Caesars were reported to the peoples *by me* [Per me Dardanii refertur Pergama Teucri, / cuam fuerit Troja Dardanus, ante fui. / Bella per Emathios per me civilia campos / edita sunt populis, Caesarumcue decus].[48]

Even the measure of the poem does not follow fixed rules but, rather, evolves in the process of poeticizing. A doctrine of poetry, a canonization, presupposes poeticizing, not the other way around: "According to my law, the seers are read into the rules" ("Lege mea Vates cantu, normaque leguntur").[49] This conception of the originality of poetry also explains Mussato's interpretation of the laurel crown as an award of honor for the poet. The beings that emerge through the poem are things that arise, bloom, and decay; that which remains eternally green is the eternal function of poetry. For this reason poetry is theology, the word of Being. The ancient gods died, just as do the gods of the present day, but what does not die is the power of the poetic language in which they appear. In Mussato's words:

> And as the laurel is evergreen and is not picked with dry leaves, so too does it [poetry] possess that eternal beauty. So it is that the brows of the seers are crowned with laurel [Utque viret laurus semper, nec fronde caduca / carpitur, aeternum sic habet illa decus. / Inde est, ut Vatum cingantur tempora lauro].[50]

In order to understand the importance of this thesis, one must

also consider the interpretation of the laurel crown expressed in the words of Giovannino of Mantua. He points out that

> the laurel crown is circular and at every point recedes from the middle [corona est circularis undique recedens a medio], which signifies that poetry usually rotates around the truth, but always remains distant from the center of this truth [Poetica maxime circa veritates circuit et versatur et a medio veritatis, ut plurimus alongatur]."[51]

For Giovannino the preacher, truth is that which is logically, rationally "fixed." When he proclaims the primacy of truth, his sole concern is the question of a relationship among beings; he does not consider the eternally green source that opens a clearing for things (*Lichten*). According to such an interpretation, the circular form of the laurel crown must naturally be regarded as something that is always "distant" from the middle, that is, from the center of gravity that Giovannino identifies with the truth. For Giovannino, the evergreen of the laurel is identical with the blooming of truth. Hence, he judges the poetic to be something "external" and "frail." He says: "The crown, however, was of laurel, which externally is green and possesses a fragrance, but internally it contains a bitterness that is evident in its fruit, which is very bitter. In this way poetry possesses a certain beauty of words that is external, but inside it contains the bitterness of vanity."[52]

Because for Mussato poetry is in essence theology, the poet has God in his heart and in his speech[53]: That which endures is not the truth of some beings which are proven to exist. To focus on these would mean falling into a forgetfulness of Being. For Mussato, poetry's role is so essential that it is itself therefore an "other philosophy" ("altera quadam philosophia").[54] It "shows," it "reveals." Thanks to its originality, it speaks through images ("sub cortice figuris") in which whatever is currently of concern comes into historical existence ("traditio nostrorum quaevis probat optima fructum").[55]

In the controversy between Mussato and Giovannino about the

sacral character of poetry we find, astonishingly, that very problem which was defined above as the problem of the ontological difference. Being, defined as the divine, is recognized and experienced as the ultimate power, a power that cannot be conceived as a being open to our view and cannot be logically defined. Poetry is understood as a sacral activity, as a holy *conciliare* in the sense of a constant reference to what is original; *conciliare* means to refer to the disturbance caused by Being's expression. "Whoever was a seer was God's vessel [vas erat ille Dei]. Every poetic work that is present today for our consideration was once the other theology [Poesis, altera quae quondam Theologia fuit]."[56]

With this thesis we are far from every form of deductive metaphysics which for Heidegger has determined the fate of Western thought. In the course of the controversy described here, Italian Humanism attempted to break away from traditional metaphysics. This is that Humanism which Heidegger rejected because he was of the opinion that it led to an anthropological perspective for which the problem of Being is something completely foreign.

Metaphor as Theology

THE PROBLEM OF THE DIFFERENCE between beings and Being led us to a discussion and understanding of the original power of the poetic word for Pontano as well as of the sacral claim of poetry according to Mussato. In what follows I want to consider the leading role played by metaphor that is so distinctive for Humanist thought. As a general introductory comment we should note that even in ancient times, the so-called "figures of speech," that is, forms of expression, were considered to be part of grammar. For example, litotes (when, instead of "many," we say "not a few") is a figure of speech as is also metonymy (when, instead of the word "fame," the word "laurel" is used). In Greek such modes of expression are called σχήματα or, in Latin, *figurae*. In ancient and later textbooks some figures of speech are called τρόποι (turn).

But the most important figure of speech is the metaphor. We

find its original structure analysed in Aristotle's *Poetics* and *Rhetoric*. Μεταφέρειν or *transferre* means to transfer. An old school example is the statement *pratum ridet*, "the meadow laughs." A further example is the word "eagle" as a metaphor for power, for ruling. In order to produce a metaphor it is necessary that a similarity between two beings is found, something they have in common (*similitudo*). Hence, Aristotle defines metaphor as "the capacity to see similarity" (τὸ ὅμοιον θεωρεῖν).[57]

Aristotle defines the metaphoric capacity as something that cannot be learned because it stems exclusively from a gift (εὐφυία). Further, metaphor presents something to us "immediately before our eyes."[58] Its "imagistic" character affects the passions and is therefore attributed to rhetoric and poetry. Because the capacity to transfer in this way is original and underived, it seems to be an effective method of teaching and learning. In order to be effective, the metaphor must be so constructed that by uncovering relationships, something peculiar and unique (οἰκεῖον) becomes visible.[59] The metaphor uncovers something that has not previously been seen; it leads to light because it stems from the need to see: that which is not obvious (μὴ φανερόν) is to be transferred.[60] It permits us, "to see the similarity between what is actually the most widely separated" (ἐν πολὺ διέχουσι θεωρεῖν).[61] Finally the metaphor is characterized by the fact that it shows us something unusual (τὸ ξενικὸν), something unexpected.

The old, traditional thesis that has come down to us through Jerome, Augustine, Cassiodorus, and Isodore of Seville, that figures of speech and, hence, metaphor are indispensable for understanding the Bible, was also taken up by the Humanists.

To return now to our problem, we should keep one thing in mind, the difference which governs between Being and beings and which originally leads man to know that all beings refer to something beyond themselves. Each particular being is a metaphor of Being. While logic remains attached to beings because it establishes and fixes their identity, metaphorical thought and speech are realized in an entirely different way. These do not remain attached to beings, but go beyond them. This is why logic denies that metaphor

has any scientific significance. Logic judges metaphor entirely in terms of what it sees as a renunciation of the exactitude of rationally establishing and fixing things. The real function of metaphor only becomes evident when the ontological distinction between Being and beings is recognized. This difference is the reason why beings confront man from the beginning as questionable and so as something to be interpreted. This is why the metaphor—as we shall see—proves to be a source of learning and, hence, of the knowledge we seek.

Because beings always arise under the sign and power of Being so as to appear in unconcealedness, Being is never identical with beings. Hence, interpreting beings as a metaphor of Being requires that we regard each being as a *velamen*, a "veil," under which Being is "concealed" and at the same time becomes "unconcealed."

This is a thesis that Coluccio Salutati presented. Here I shall quote from his work *De laboribus Herculis*, to which reference was made at the beginning of our discussions. Salutati was born in 1331 in Stignano and died in 1406. He belongs to the generation that followed Petrarch and, next to Boccaccio, was his most important disciple. In 1375 he became the Chancellor of Florence, a position that he held continuously for thirty-one years until his death. He was the outstanding figure in the "Paradiso degli Alberti," the first Humanistic circle of scholars at the monastery of Santo Spirito in Florence, and he arranged to have Manuel Chrysoloras invited to Florence as the first Greek teacher in Italy.

Salutati's thesis takes the discussions offered by Mussato and Boccaccio (in the latter's *Genealogia deorum*) as his starting point, while at the same time conceiving Boccaccio's ideas in a much more radical way. He writes:

> The poets, whether they create fables in rhyme or report the pure truth about historic deeds ... have as their inmost desire to point to something that goes beyond nature, customs, or actual deeds. [Poete, sive fabulas inserant sive puram rerum gestarum afferant veritatem ... per illa volunt medullitus aliud aliquid quod naturam, mores, et vera gesta respiciant designare].[62]

Salutati formulates his thesis that metaphor represents the *velamen* of what is original as follows:

> These authors [the Theologians] therefore tell us of the secret of the true God from behind the veil of poetic language [poetice locutionis velamine divinitatis vera misteria retulerunt]. Under the force of necessity, they discovered that manner of speaking that made use of the poetic [Et hac quidem necessitate figuratus iste loquendi modus quem poetica profitetur].[63]

Being (identified by the Humanists with God's sovereign power) is never to be equated with individual unconcealed beings. That is the difference between Being and beings. Moreover, for the Humanists, the knowledge we have of Being's unconcealment is metaphorical:

> And if for this reason we change the words, objects, or actions through which he [Being or God] reveals himself to us—to the extent and in manner he wishes—we then speak and act with regard to what cannot be spoken [Et ob id commutantes verba, res atque negocia, per que ipsemet se nobis quantum et qualiter voluit revelavit, de hoc licet ineffabili, loquimur et tractamus].[64]

Metaphorical activity is symbolized for Salutati by the golden bough of which Vergil speaks in the *Aeneid*, the bough which he was to use in order to get the dead to speak so that he might learn their directions for meeting his historical tasks. "To put one thing in the place of another, which only the poet can do, is what Vergil was thinking of in the golden bough that the Sibyl ordered Aeneas to break off before entering the underworld" ("Rem vero pro re quod non est alterius quam poete, posuit in aureo ramo quem discerpendum Sybilla monuit antequam inferos adiret").[65]

The sacral function of metaphor, which Mussato stressed, is given a still more consistent formulation by Salutati. Referring to the ancients, he approves of their mythology and says:

> For as they [the Greeks] called one and the same divinity in the heavens Luna, in the forests Diana, and in the underworld Proserpina, they also presupposed this whole complex of gods as a single essence of them all and named it according to the plurality of its possibilities and with the different names of their activities [Nam sicut unum et idem numen in caelo Lunam, Dianam in silvis vocant, et Proserpinam in inferno, sic omnem illam deorum numerositatem unam omnium presupponentes essentiam juxta potentiarum varietatem et actuum diversis nominibus vocaverunt].[66]

A Problem of Semiotics

IN ORDER TO SHOW THE IMPORTANCE of Salutati's discussion of these topics and to evaluate their contribution to the questions we have been considering, I want now, before continuing the interpretation of Salutati's ideas, to give attention to several notions in contemporary semiotics. This will help us to clarify the role of metaphor.

Semiotics is the doctrine of signs (σῆμα). Phenomena of a physical, biological, historical, sociological, and literary nature can all be organized and interpreted on the basis of semiotics. In order to understand the method and goal of semiotics, it is helpful to begin with one of its central concepts, the "code." A code is a system of signs whose elements receive their meanings within this system. Such elements, for example, are neutral sign vehicles such as lines, points, colors, tones, or movements. A code is a kind of structure that is applied to phenomena in order to give them an order and a particular meaning. Just as the graphic signs of a telegram are decoded and read by means of Morse code, semiotics attempts to interpret beings with different codes, that is, it seeks to find the objective signs by which beings can be "read." The assertion that certain ordering principles govern the world of beings testifies to nothing other than that beings only come to light on the basis of a governing code or directive signs and that it is necessary to begin

with this code, if we are to understand reality. Hence, every language, for example, presupposes its particular code in order for its purely physical acoustic phenomena of which it is composed to become understandable.

I believe it is necessary here to raise the generally neglected question of the relationship between code and metaphor. It is obvious that "reading" or "deciphering" reality in the sign system of a code constitutes a kind of metaphorical activity insofar as a meaning is "transferred" to the neutral sign vehicles—tones, movements, colors, and so on—by means of the code. But can we say then that code and metaphor are identical? Or, more precisely, does the activity of decoding which lends meanings to reality exhaust the essence and function of the metaphor?

Let us recall the defining characteristics that we have attributed to the metaphor in accordance with Aristotelian theory. Metaphor presupposes the capacity to see something in common between beings (ὁμοιότης, *similitudo*). This way it presents us with something "immediately before our eyes" that is not readily seen (μὴ φανερόν) and is itself even somewhat "unique" (οἰκεῖον). Metaphor discovers relationships between beings that are very widely separated from each other in their nature, and thereby acts to bring us to something unusual, unexpected, and new.

But *no code* is capable of fulfilling this function because a code merely establishes the governing system of relations that are already given and on the basis of which something is interpreted. No existing code can lead to a *new* code because its essence consists in "fixing" certain things into place so that they appear in this light as beings. This way the real is "read" on the basis of a previously given code.

The same thing occurs here as in logical thought. Rationality in the deductive process depends upon the premisses. They provide the limits and framework in which the deduction can take place. In other words, this rational process lacks a creative or inventive function. Hence, the basic problem of logic and semiotics (which becomes meta-semiotics when this question is raised) is: How can the existing codes be broken through when they prove to be

insufficient and outmoded? How do new codes arise?

This problem can also be formulated in the following way. Beings appear in the framework of a code—we could also say they are subject to its "claim" (*Anspruch*). Each particular code can be equated with those beings that it interprets. But in the course of our discussion we have seen that all beings—and this includes each of the codes that are instrumental in bringing things to light—are unenduring because beings are not themselves original (*ursprungliches*). Again and again we experience that needs and claims, including those of semiotic codes to which beings are subject, prove to be fleeting. Here we meet with the historicity of each code and the beings it applies to. What does endure and is original, however, is the constant need for "de-coding," that is, the need to find a new code.

We can illustrate this problem with an example. Every language (in and through which reality is "read") works in accordance with its own code. It is sufficient to recall the pictorial character of Far Eastern languages and the difference between them and the rational modes of Western thought and speech, and to note that the original, pictorial script of the Eastern languages is changing under the influence of the basic rational code that is infiltrating from the West. In a similar way the Greek and Latin languages arose, flourished, and decayed.

The function of a metaphor, unlike that of a code, does not consist merely in applying an interpretation but also in "finding" the new code on the basis of which reality is rendered. It gives us a new perspective of relationships between beings. Metaphor's function is that of invention—the seeing of new relationships. It is metaphor that produces each new code.

Two examples may clarify this task of metaphor. In 494 B.C., in Italy, plebeians and patricians stood in open opposition to one another. Each side interpreted the conflict on the basis of a common code. We can define this code as "mechanical"; inevitably neither party could find a solution other than the conflict itself. And then there was suddenly a surprising turn. A "new code" was found through Menenius Agrippa's fable of the belly and the

members, a metaphor replacing the older "mechanical" code with an "organic" one. Agrippa's fable identifies the interests of each group on the basis of the common well-being of the whole organism. Forces receive different meanings from their new context. By finding organic rather than mechanical relationships among beings, metaphorical activity establishes another code. Metaphorical thought, then, does not consist in the simple transformation of meanings characteristic even of codes, but in the truly creative function of finding new codes and structures.

My second example is the discovery of the relationship between steam and power, so familiar to us but not recognized for thousands of years. This discovery led to something completely new, an *inventio* that served the controlling of nature, the development of the steam engine. The machine receives precisely the same meaning here that Aristotle gave to the term μηχανή. According to Aristotle: "If it is necessary to make something in nature [τὶ κατὰ φῦσιν πράξαι] and we know of no way because of the difficulty of the task [ἀπορίαν παρέχει] and so have need of an art [δεῖται τέχνης], we therefore call that kind of art that helps us find a way [μηχανή]."[67] Metaphorical thought leads to invention and new knowledge, such as the insight into the connection between steam and power. The surprising connections between learning, knowledge, and metaphor become especially clear in one Humanistic text that I want to consider next.

Metaphor as the Origin of Learning and Knowledge

IN *De laboribus Herculis* Salutati examines the ancient tradition of the Muses as a way to understand the origins of learning and knowledge (*scientia*).[68] At first glance his comments strike us as odd, and one might think that he was trying to avoid a philosophical discussion. I pass over the historical problem of the extent to which Salutati's interpretation derives from Fulgentius or Martianus Capella and to what degree he differs from them. The Muses belong to those constants of literary tradition found through the ages, but

they do not have to do only with the field of poetry; they apply to all the higher forms of the life of the mind. To live with the Muses, as Cicero stated, is to live humanistically ("cum Musis, id est, cum humanitate et doctrina").[69] There are, of course, contradictory views or traditions concerning the Muses. Hesiod's Muses are different from Homer's; Empedocles' are different from those of Theocritus. Nonetheless they represent a purely intellectual principle: As Cicero says, *all* the higher forms of the mind, philosophy as well, must stand under the sign of the Muses.

When Salutati goes back to the tradition of the Muses, he insists from the outset that he will not discuss the problem on the basis of a rational metaphysics. Furthermore, a cursory look at the text reveals a striking fact. Contrary to every expectation, Salutati does not interpret the individual Muses as the respective sources of the individual sciences. Rather, he claims that it is only the Muses in their *totalaity* which provide the presupposition of learning and *scientia*. Their complete presence is what makes the search for knowledge possible (*scientiam querere*) and insures attaining a *doctrina perfecta*.[70]

Salutati's arbitrary etymologies of the names of individual Muses need not be presented here in detail; some examples will suffice. Clio, the first Muse to be named, represents the drive for fame ("Prima namque cogitationi discere cupientium primum occurrit fame celebritas que gloria est. Unde Clyos a 'cleos' quod est 'gloria' dicta est").[71] Euterpe, the second of the Muses, refers to the "happy desire" to learn ("Euterpen, quod latine dicit nichil aliud esse quam 'bene delectans' ").[72] Melpomene stands for continuous effort in the pursuit of studies ("Meditationem faciens permanere").[73]

At the conclusion of his discussion Salutati recounts the nine functions of the Muses in regard to learning and knowledge:

> So that science can be perfected, it is most important to want to learn with pleasure, to be persevering, to perceive, to remember the perceived, to find something out from all of these, to make a judgment about what has been found out, and finally, to make a selection [Oportet enim, ut doctrina

> perfecta sit, primum velle, secundum delectabiliter velle quod discas, tertio perseverare, quartum percipere, quintum percepta tenere, sextum ex his omnibus aliquid invenire, septimum judicare super inventis, octavum eligere, nonum et ultimum optime pronuntiare].[74]

We see that the first three Muses represent the personal attitude in learning and knowing (urge for fame, Clio; wanting or striving in happy pursuit, Euterpe; perseverance, Melpomene). The other six Muses, on the other hand, symbolize capacities such as the *capacitas*, Thalia ("Taliam locavit in ordine quam 'capacitatem' vult"), memory, Polyhymnia ("Polimniam enumerat quasi 'multa memorantem.' 'Polis' enim 'pluralitas,' 'Neomen' memoria est"), or the "finding of what is common," Erato ("Erato quod ex Graeco confirmans latine dici quasi similia invenit").[75]

Let us look more closely at Salutati's comments about the fifth Muse, Polyhymnia, and her relationship to the sixth, Erato. Polyhymnia mainly symbolizes the retention of what is perceived (*memoria est*),[76] but this does not exhaust her activities. As Salutati writes: "He is not, however, a man of knowledge who is not capable of breaking through what he has experienced to the discovery of similar things" (qui ex his que perceperit nescit in similium inventionem erumpere").[77] The retention or recollection of what has been experienced (*percipere*) only leads to knowledge, therefore, when it "breaks through" to an *invenire* of what is similar (*in similium inventionem erumpere*). The sentence that follows explicates the relationship between knowledge and finding what is similar:

> For what would it mean to only remain with the parts and not with something that is worthy of our efforts, namely, with putting together what results from imitating what is perceived and then moving from one similar thing to the next? [Quid enim esset solum incumbere partis et nichil dignum tanto studio vel saltem perceptorum imitatione componere et de similibus in similia se transferre?].[78]

Inventio of what is common, "seeing what is similar," provides the presupposition of metaphorical thought and leads to the learning and knowledge which arise from the application of the *similitudo* in whose light reality is read. In today's terminology we might also say that the essence of cognition is the particular view of things that provides the structure or code on the basis of which the transfer then becomes possible. Salutati emphasizes the importance of the *inventio* represented by the Muse Erato with regard to the efforts of this Muse in supplementing the activity of Polyhymnia: "Erato quod ex Greco confirmat Latine dici quasi 'similia inveniens.' "[79]

At the end of the Humanistic tradition Vico recognized this thesis as the essential content of Humanism and made it the basis of his *New Science*: "The capacity to know is the *Ingenium*. It provides the capacity to see the similar and to create. . . . Hence, *Ingenium* is necessary for invention because it is the work of a single *Ingenium* to invent new things. . . . Imagination is the eye of the *Ingenium*."[80]

Vico recognizes that beings are not the starting point of an original form of metaphysical thought, but rather that beings appear as unconcealed in the light of "ingenious images," through the claim of Being. In Vico's attempt to clarify the essential difference between beings and that which *Ingenium* reveals we find that insight which, in our terminology, has been called the ontological difference. Vico writes: "*Ingenium* and nature meant the same thing for the Italians. This is because the human *Ingenium* is itself the nature of man. . . . Those who excell in this capacity were called by the Italians 'ingegneri.' "[81] Metaphorical activity plays a central role in this process. It provides, on the basis of the recognition of similarities, the images in whose light we "read" reality.

This activity of remembering, represented for Salutati by the Muse Polyhymnia, provides the presupposition of metaphorical thought. The memory that concerns us here is *not* directed to given beings. For, in order to attain knowledge, it is necessary to refer back to what originally confronts and expresses itself to man. That is, it is necessary, as Vico formulates it, to recall that which originally "possesses" man because it is only by its power, through the metaphorical word, that the sense of beings appears.

This problem of recalling fundamentals is also found in Heidegger, for example, in the following sentences about the concept of "memory":

> Memory, the gathered thinking that recalls, is the source and ground of poeticizing. Hence, the essence of poetry rests upon thinking. . . . As long, of course, as we conceive of thinking according to what logic tells us about it, as long as we do not seriously take note that all logic is already fixed upon a particular kind of thinking, then we will not be able to recognize that, and to what extent, poeticizing rests upon thinking that recalls.[82]

It appears to me useful to review the terms that we have encountered in our analysis of Humanistic texts, regarding them once again in the context of the problem of the ontological difference between Being and beings. Being is that which is original and which (according to the Humanistic thesis of *velamen*) reveals only in concealing and thereby places what exists (*das Daseiende*) before an abyss (*Ab-grund*) since no being can provide it with "support." Below this existential urgency, comparable to the safety net below acrobats, we find the *Ingenium* as the net in which Being permits beings to appear and assert themselves in constantly changing situations. *Ingenium* is therefore not subjective, but the presupposition of every subject-being.

Imagination, on the other hand, is the subject's capacity to take the structure of Being from concealment through metaphor as it is represented by *Ingenium*. The objective structure of Being which *Ingenium* represents can, therefore, only be exposed through metaphor by its projection of each particular code for beings and by letting this appear as a metaphor of Being. The *similitudo* between Being and beings comes therefore to light in metaphor: this is ἀλήθεια, *Lichtung*.

Metaphor creates an image, a structure, a system of coordinates that reveals connections on the basis of previously unnoticed relationships that, to this extent, were previously non-existent relation-

ships for those concerned. By transferring something invisible to an image it makes the invisible visible. The image permits the invisible to appear; hence, imagination is the letting appear of things (φαίνεσθαι).

To put it another way, metaphor is the rescue from the urgencies of life in which Being announces itself. It is *the* rescue; there is no other kind. Without metaphor, man, faced with urgencies by which Being threatens to push him into the abyss, would most certainly be destroyed. For the Humanists, metaphor has primacy over all rational, deductive learning and knowledge. A further insight is that languages—and along with them the gods and customs of peoples—arise, flourish, and decay. Time results from the experience of the historicity of metaphors by which reality emerges from concealment.

Man comes to himself through the urgency of the word. Original thinking is not identical with scientific, rational thought, for that always begins with the question of beings. The original coming into the open of things can never be "proven," insofar as this means to derive a state of affairs through a chain of inferences from certain presuppositions.

According to the Humanist tradition, the hidden God must be watched over in his concealment. To fix him once and for all in the particular way he appears in unconcealment is to lose him. One cannot remain fixed upon the way he appears to us in *velamina*. Heidegger formulates this thought this way:

> The measure [*Mass*] consists in the way that the unknown god is revealed *as* this through the heavens. God's appearance through the heavens consists of an exposure that allows what is concealed to be visible, but does not permit it to be seen by taking what is hidden from its hiddenness. Rather, it does this solely by watching over [*hütet*] what is hidden in its self-concealment.[83]

IV

Heidegger's Overturning of Religious Meaning

Forgetfulness of Being in Traditional Metaphysics

TRADITIONAL METAPHYSICS DEALS WITH BEINGS and the problem of the relationships between them, between subject and object, and thereby gives prime importance to the problem of truth and rational language. But this type of philosophy, according to Heidegger, has come to an end. Heidegger shows that the main question of Western philosophy is the problem of logical truth. But this question, in his opinion, is only the "one before last," for the "last" one, the basic question, is the one that asks about the unhiddenness (*Unverborgenheit*) of Being, a question that cannot define Being by rational means. "Before this question can be posed, philosophy, if it is to provide a foundation of its activity, must precede this with a theory of knowledge or consciousness, remaining on a path that so to speak is in the antechamber of philosophy and does not turn around its center."[1]

The questions that are of the greatest importance in philosophy today can no longer, therefore, be directed to truth or rational knowledge. Rather, philosophy must face the problem of how Being itself can be brought into the openness of its essence; this is the question of the claim of Being. Man is set out among beings. He clears the "dark forest" of which Vico speaks. He must step out of it and overcome it. He must perform the deed of Hercules and produce a "clearing." This can only be understood as an act directed against the forest; only this discloses the new. Man must find out where he stands again and again in this activity of clearing a way, a task that arises by Being's claims upon man.

The knowledge by which man achieves a particular "standing" presupposes the opening up of a particular historical space. It is the poetic word that, according to Heidegger, originally brings about this uncovering of a particular historical place, in the sign of the claim of Being. For this reason, Being is not to be separated from the historical appearance of beings.

I have tried to show how Italian Humanism developed a programmatic thesis about poetry, a thesis that did not regard poetry simply as "literature." The early Humanists tried to free themselves from traditional ways of thinking and to avoid slipping into metaphysical arguments. We can recognize here how a new form of philosophizing begins that has no relationship to the rationalistic approach of Descartes and his attempt to found a new philosophy and the sciences. On the other hand, modern thought, beginning with Descartes, did everything in its power to obscure the importance of the Humanistic tradition.

Heidegger's claim that Western philosophy has come to an end is based upon his critical rejection of the metaphysics which, Heidegger says, fell into the forgetfulness of Being. This is undeniable. In regard to this thesis, I want to emphasize that in Western metaphysics, which begins with Plato's interpretation of Socrates, the starting point is the problem of truth and the primacy of this investigation is upheld throughout the whole history of this tradition of thought.

The question of truth stems from a relationship to be found among beings, the subject-object relationship. By assuming this starting point, philosophy unavoidably follows this relationship among beings and so is led to a particular basic question. In such a context, the question of "unhiddenness," in contrast to the question of "truth," can neither be posed nor discussed.

In opposition to Heidegger's criticism of the forgetfulness of Being in traditional metaphysics, the following argument is sometimes made. Plato speaks again and again of the "sudden," "immediate," and "incomprehensible" appearance of insight in the sphere of the noetic (for example, in his Seventh Letter) and this noetic insight is contrasted with rational, inferential thinking. From this, one could

conclude, the doctrine of νοῦς is in fact differentiated from that of beings. But this objection overlooks that, for the general structure of Plato's metaphysics, it is essential that the *ideas*, as the totality of beings and all the contents of thought (hence of all beings), form a well-ordered system. And from this the definitions of beings are rationally *inferred* by means of logical, dialectical investigation.

The same approach is found in Aristotle. Even though Aristotle rejects the Platonic theory of ideas, metaphysics is nonetheless the rational deduction of beings from a first being. Scientific, rational knowledge results from the definition of different contents of thought within an original whole. Hence Heidegger asserts that traditional metaphysics is always led by the question of logical truth. This problem has taken on different forms from the beginning of Western (Platonic) philosophy, through the Middle Ages, up to the modern control of the world. Thus the one asking questions has himself "taken up a position towards beings and within beings as a whole."[2]

The Primacy of Having "Attitude" in Contrast to Having "Capacity"

THERE ARE THREE BASIC CAPACITIES with which traditional metaphysics delimits and secures the sphere of beings: "rational knowledge," "memory," and the "will." Heidegger contrasts these basic capacities, required to contend with the problem of beings, with the three *attitudes* needed in philosophizing about Being. The first basic capacity on which traditional metaphysics builds is "knowledge." By means of knowledge the different phenomena are "explained" by giving a "ground" or "reason" so that they are grasped and "stand" for any time and place in a fixed form and can be defined. The explanations provided by giving reasons or grounds enable man to gain control over changing phenomena by rationally "establishing" their character and making them subject to calculation.

This conception of phenomena leads in traditional metaphysics to the realization that for the constitution of knowledge a further

capacity is necessary: "memory" (*memoria*). Its function consists in the preservation (*Bewahren*) of that which is found in the light of knowledge. It is the capacity to go back to what has been "established" or fixed by knowledge. In this regard, Dante writes in *De Monarchia*, after emphasizing the primacy of rational knowledge, that "man's highest task, that which is instilled in him by a higher nature as the love of wisdom, is to give further generations the same riches that were handed down from earlier ones."[3] Dante adds a warning that anyone who is not concerned to pass on knowledge through memory must be regarded as a threat. He is not a tree planted beside the flowing river of knowledge to bear fruit at the right time, but rather a dangerous growth that consumes everything (*perniciosa vorago semper ingurgitans*).[4]

Accordingly, the traditional metaphysics of beings must also call upon a third capacity when it construes the relationship of theory to practice; this capacity is the "will." In the first book of *De Monarchia*, Dante repeatedly points to the need to begin every theoretical discussion—even when it is concerned with politics and, hence, with historical action—by reference to a first truth, a truth that must be "established" for every time and place.[5] The will must serve knowledge, which "establishes" what is (beings), by applying cognition to practice. The will must be derived from what has been founded by knowledge and remembered; without these other capacities the will is blind. Practice can be managed only by the "will" in the light of rational knowledge.

So, in the framework of traditional metaphysics, "knowledge," "memory," and "will" all appear as the basic capacities that unlock the sphere of beings, that define and secure its limits. The step from the rational metaphysics of beings, concerned with the problem of truth, to the philosophy of Being, which is concerned with the problem of unhiddenness, requires that we admit that these three capacities cannot be called upon as the decisive way to uncover Being. Every explanation or giving of "grounds," which is the presupposition of knowledge, even every attempt to do so, would mean forgetting Being because it would reduce Being to a being. The realization that the original horizon of Being as it is heard in the

verb "is,"and in whose sphere we find all particular beings, cannot be rationally defined shows that the primacy of knowledge is only a seeming one.

But where knowledge is no longer decisive nor can be, as here in regard to the problem of unhiddenness, we must turn to "belief." Heidegger defines belief as: "a holding in the true [*Sichhalten im Wahren*] and so a holding in the double sense of giving support [*einen Halt geben*] and preserving an attitude [*eine Haltung bewahren*]."[6]

In order to avoid any misunderstanding about the way Heidegger uses the term *das Wahre* (the true) here, it should be clear that he does not mean truth in the usual logical sense. When he speaks of *wahren* (to preserve or "hold"), he distinguishes clearly between belief and knowledge. Belief is not to be thought of as a level of cognition, but as an "attitude" (*Haltung*), which man assumes when he does not adhere to something that has been "fixed," and so does not dogmatically adhere to beings or look for final foundations among beings. Heidegger writes: "Where the attitude remains *only* a result of something held to or stance purposely taken, then it is not an attitude (*Haltung*) we hold to because this can only hold (*hält*) if and so long as it is able to stand for itself, whereas the attitude that holds to this must collapse as soon as this hold (*Halt*) is taken away."[7]

Belief is the attitude which grants Being its innermost right to "becoming" (*Werden*). If logical truth admits only what can be proved to be true, but this truth cannot be recognized as primary or original for philosophizing that is concerned with the clearing of Being (*Lichtung des Seins*), then "proof" can also no longer retain a leading role here.

Belief as an attitude or stance is found again and again in the new and different tasks that confront us and force us to "hold" to what we hold to: ". . . To hold to something and have an attitude will show this all the more clearly the more essentially it is possible to fall back on oneself and not just to brace oneself and so to depend upon support."[8] The pressing situation experienced by "being-there" which results from the force of the claim of Being and the attitude of belief, which takes the place of the capacity to know,

combine to create two further basic "attitudes" that take the place of memory and will. Philosophizing as the recollection of Being results in the attitudes of "hope" and "openness." These make it possible for Being to reveal itself to a *Dasein*, a being-there.

In relationship to the concept of "hope," however, knowledge and memory, as the preservation of what is known, exclude hope. The rational process only makes evident what is already included in the premises or presuppositions. The only thing that can surprise us in the sphere of the rational is a false result, and this is always explicable as an imprecision in the application of the rational process of thought, hence, as an error, an incapacity. Hope is an attitude that can only be found in the context of *inventio*, of "discovery," never in a rational deduction. A rational process can never permit us to discover anything; it presupposes that we have already found our premises. Hope as a basic attitude is directed towards an expectation of the "new," the indeducible, and in this sense, the "unusual." It belongs to the sphere of the ingenious, not that of the rational.

Besides belief and hope, philosophizing that stands in the "clearing" of Being requires a third attitude, "openness" in the place of "will." In contrast to will, openness means precisely not to adhere to a particular being that has been revealed. The principle of sufficient reason makes possible the explanation of phenomena in order to "establish" them as beings. According to this principle, the realization of knowledge depends upon the object of knowledge; the will presupposes the beings that it wants to explain and adheres to them. But since beings are always revealed only in the sign of Being, and this is never exhausted by individual beings, every adherence to a particular being is an expression of the forgetfulness of Being. In this forgetfulness of Being we find the roots of all dogmatism. Dogmatism overlooks that Being is announced in different forms in beings. This adherence to particular, rationally established, beings leads man into a situation where there is no way out: Man is always referred back to what he has himself rationally established and can only move in a circle. But since the subject, man, is himself a being, he must give up reliance upon his own knowledge, memory,

and will. This basic attitude towards every new possibility of beings and hence, also towards other subjects was interpreted in the Western tradition as *caritas*, as love, as "openness."

Heidegger writes: "Man is forced into such a being-there, hurled into the affliction (*Not*) of such being, because the overpowering as such, in order to appear in its power, *requires* a place, a scene of disclosure. The essence of being-human opens up to us only when understood through this need compelled by Being itself."[9]

The Tradition of Negative Theology: Dionysius the Areopagite

WITH SURPRISE WE RECOGNIZE that the three basic "attitudes" (belief, hope, openness) that are put forth by a philosophy of unhiddenness in contrast to the three "capacities" (knowledge, memory, will) that belong to the metaphysics of beings, are the same as the three theological virtues in Western thought. They make it possible to experience the original Being—God—by letting man submit to the claim of this power that is directed to him.

We must therefore distinguish, as Heidegger does, between two fundamental problems, first, that of beings, the problem of truth—the rational "establishing" of beings by the giving of reasons or grounds. This is the problematic situation in which man's everyday thought and action are confined. But, second, there is also the problem of the unhiddenness of Being whose essence is found in the clarification of the existential forms of experience through which Being is originally revealed in all its original power. For the clarification of this problem rational thought has long since proved to be inadequate. On the other hand, the problems of logic are not annulled or eliminated by the question of unhiddenness when it takes the place of the question of truth. Insofar as Being is revealed in particular beings, it is impossible to "establish" beings with regard to their logical structure, which is the task of rational arguments that give us "grounds."

The relationship between the sphere of beings and that of Being

can be understood through a metaphor. Everydayness, the sphere in which man thinks, speaks, and acts, is the sphere of beings. We can refer to this sphere metaphorically as the "bright day" of rationality; all phenomena are placed (*gestellt*) in a certain order in the light of this day by the rational explanation of beings. But we also become aware that this "bright day" leads to the "dark night" of the non-rational, the original claim of Being. This is a dark night because it cannot be rationally established and so cannot be explained. Put in a different way, man moves in a sphere that is originally suspended between the twofold phenomena of day and night, for what seems "clear" to him and explicable stems from what is originally "dark" for rationality: the claim of Being.

What surprises us here is therefore not only that Heidegger's philosophy of unhiddenness refers to three basic attitudes that are originally known in the tradition as theological virtues, but also that we find his principal thesis, that Being or God cannot be rationally conceived or thought of, in the Western religious tradition too, in negative theology. It is necessary to comment briefly on this tradition before we can deal with the question of whether Heidegger's basic theses and the outlook of negative theology are identical or radically different. This is not a historical question, but part of the attempt to define more closely the "claim of Being on man" that Heidegger sought to determine.

To return to our metaphor, Heidegger's conception of the step from the rational metaphysics of beings to that of Being is like the step from the "day" of rationality to the "night" of the abyss. But this night may not be identified with the sphere of the irrational for it founds the space in which appear beings as phenomena that can be explained.

Outside the traditional metaphysics of beings there is, as we mentioned, another Western tradition that distinguishes quite clearly between the capacities that are decisive for the sphere of beings and the intellectual attitudes that lead to a revelation of Being identified with God. This is the tradition of negative theology. The two classic examples are Dionysius the Areopagite (5th century A.D.) and John of the Cross (1542–91). As is well known, Diony-

sius distinguishes between three forms of theology or ways of making assertions about God. The one speaks about God by rational arguments that give us "grounds" and names God with names that everyone can understand.[10] He calls this a positive theology. The second kind, which Dionysius calls "symbolic theology," speaks of God in terms of "unsimilar similarities." It speaks of the divine through images that can be grasped through the senses.[11] The third kind of theology Dionysius calls "negative." This recognizes that every word and rational proposition about God is actually an impossibility; we cannot name or speak about God.[12] Negative theology leads from the sphere of what can be "established" as a being, the sphere where logic is decisive, to a higher sphere where rational language and thought can no longer be regarded as decisive.[13]

In other words, for negative theology the essence and characteristics of God are hidden, in the sense that man cannot gain access to them by means of "rational efforts." Rather, if he wants to attain to this original sphere, he must enter into the darkness of what for rationality is not knowledge and he must express himself, as in the case of John of the Cross, in poetic language. In the tradition of negative theology the problem of Being is spoken of with theological terminology in the sense that God is understood as that which originally speaks to us, but which cannot be thought of logically or spoken of in logical terms. In his discussion of "The Names of God," Dionysius claims that God is inconceivable for thought (ἀδιανοητόν) and unspeakable for language (ἀρρετόν) because God transcends all expressions insofar as he is the original one which makes possible the insight into unity of any kind:

> Here (with God) we are concerned with a knowing wisdom that is no longer accessible to any knowing wisdom [νοῦς ἀνόητος] . . . he is a non-word, non-knowledge, a non-name [ἀλογία, ἀνοησία, ἀνωνομία], hence, this now is not a being of any kind [μηδὲν τῶν ὄντων οὖσα]; the cause of the being of all things is itself not a thing and not a being [αὐτὸ δὲ μὴ ὄν].[14]

But since God is over all things (ὑπὲρ πάντα τὰ ὄντα ἔστιν), he cannot himself have a shape and yet he gives a shape to every being (εἰδοποιεῖ).[15] Dionysius claims explicitly that divine Being is different in every particular being even though in every case we are confronted with the same divine Being. Hence, he is revealed in every being and yet always hidden in them. "In short, he is everything, all beings, and yet none of these, not a being" [πάντα τὰ ὄντα, καὶ οὐδὲν τῶν ὄντων].[16]

Both of these theses—that Being is both revealed and hidden in beings, and that in every different being one and the same Being is found—are theses that we met with in Heidegger's thought. That is, we find here Heidegger's claim that Being reveals and conceals itself in beings.

The "Rational Day" of Beings and the "Dark Night" of Being: John of the Cross (1542–91)

IN OUR DISTINCTION BETWEEN THE TRADITIONAL METAPHYSICS of beings and Heidegger's philosophy of unhiddenness we explained that the first of these was to be regarded as the "bright day" of *ratio* while the latter could be regarded as the sphere of "night" in which the original claim of Being was found, something that rational thought and speech cannot reflect in a direct way and for which they cannot have the decisive word. In order to follow this parallel we selected the tradition of negative theology as found in the writings of John of the Cross. This may at first glance seem to be an odd choice since Heidegger himself, in his comments on negative theology, referred to another representative of this tradition, Meister Eckhart. But we should note that, in contrast to Meister Eckhart, John of the Cross not only developed the basic theses of negative theology, but went a step further. In his works we find a particularly clear comparison between the "capacities" that are decisive for the sphere of beings (knowledge as rational thought, memory, and will) and the intellectual "attitudes" that make possible the appearance of Being (belief, hope, love).

Not only this, all of John of the Cross's prose works such as "The Living Flame of the Love" (*La flama de amor viva*) are conceived as commentaries on his poetic writings. These poems are themselves, as John of the Cross explains, an original expression of his experience of the unhiddenness of Being that he identifies with God. In a letter to Doña Ana de Peñalosa, a letter that forms the proem to his commentary on his poems in "The Living Flame of the Love," he writes:

> I sense . . . a certain hesitant attitude in me to send you an explanation, as you requested, of the poem I wrote. And in fact it is concened with such inner and spiritual things [cosas tan interiores y espirituales] for which there are no usual expressions because the spiritual goes beyond the sensory realm [para las quales comunemente falta lenguaje, porque lo espiritual excede lo sentido]. It is also difficult to speak from the inner realm of the spirit if one is not completely impermeated with it [porque tambien se habla mal en las entranas del espiritu si no es con entranable espiritu].[17]

We are concerned here with the experience of beings spoken to by divine Being and with beings able to reply to this only by means of metaphors because what is original in this way can be expressed only thus.

John of the Cross emphasizes that the transformation which he experiences through the fire of sacred claim leads him to a poetic expression, not a rational discussion. This state of being "inflamed" he sees as the movement in which the soul is ignited so as to form the light of the flame and thereby is "carried over" (μεταφέρειν) to a new level. "[The soul] senses it in this way and speaks it in this way in the poem . . . burning in this fire" ("Y ella asi lo siente y asi lo dice en estas canciones . . . ardiendo en su llama").[18]

John of the Cross formulates his basic thesis thus: "No being or thought can serve as a means of communication to unite us with God" ("ninguna cosa criada, ni pensada, puede servir al entendimiento de proprio medio para unirse con Dios").[19] The shape, im-

age, or form of a being are actually only the "surface" (*corteza*) of the mind.[20] The being that is unhidden before us conceals original, divine Being. With this distinction between beings and divine Being John of the Cross opposes the three capacities that are decisive for the bright day of rational explanation (understanding, memory, and will) to the attitudes that are decisive for the night of the nonrational: belief, hope, and love.

John of the Cross says explicitly that rational understanding tries to hold to beings: "The understanding is the receptacle (*receptaculo*) of all objects."[21] Rational thought, because it is subject to the principle of sufficient reason, can always point to further beings in the course of the explanations it offers and therefore can never come to a final end of thought. In an allusion to a passage in the Old Testament (Isaiah 59:10), he compares this fact to the experience of a blind man who feels his way along a wall and meets another blind man. In the midst of the bright day of rationality they move through darkness without being able to find the end of the wall. Yet there is a form of certainty that does not refer to beings of any kind, but arises from the divine power of Being to reveal things, and this is not a form of proof: "Belief . . . tells us what the understanding cannot prove" (" . . . la fè . . . nos dice lo que no se puede entender con el entendimento").[22]

This insight leads unavoidably to the sphere of "darkness" and what from the standpoint of the rational seems to be an abyss, but this "happy night" gives birth to the "light" in which the things appear ("esta dichosa noche, aunque obscurece el espiritu, no hace sino por darle luz a todas las cosas").[23] It is the night of the rational that prepares us for the "enjoyment and taste of all natural and supernatural things" ("gozar y gustar de todas las cosas de arriba y abajo").[24] This leads to the denial of memory because memory, as the mere retention of what is known, can never extend beyond the sphere of beings.[25] In the place of memory we have a striving for the new: hope.[26]

Finally, John of the Cross proposes love, *caritas*, as "openness" for all things as an attitude that contrasts with the capacity of will. Will is the capacity that is decisive for the sphere of beings because

our concern in this sphere is to realize by means of the will what we have come to know and can remember by putting these into practice. The will is directed towards the different individual beings that we have come to understand and "explain," and it remains attached to these things. In the case of *caritas*, however, existence recognizes a deep "humility and a depreciation of himself and of all that belongs to him" ("mucha humilidad y desprecio de si y de todas sus cosas").[27]

To summarize, holding to rational truth as it is found in rationalistic metaphysics means holding to the giving of reasons by means of argumentative proof. But with this every question or doubt is set aside. For this tradition claims to be able to find a "fixed position" in the flux and change which characterize becoming and so to draw the limits against every disturbance. Such thinking claims to lead action in the bright day of rationality. The kind of thinking that John of the Cross proposes is just the opposite. Here, rational, argumentative proofs and cognition no longer have priority. The capacities of knowledge, memory, and will are replaced by the attitudes of belief, hope, and openness.

Heidegger's Reversal of Negative Theology

THREE BASIC THESES CHARACTERIZE Heidegger's thought: the ontological difference, the necessity of the question of unhiddenness—in place of the question of truth—and, finally, the self-revelation and simultaneous concealing of Being in beings. These three theses are expressions of the insight that all thought and action take place only against the horizon of the groundless (*ab-gründigen*) power of the claim of Being (*An-spruch des Seins*) which "speaks" to us. Heidegger speaks of the "holiness" of the original "unhiddenness," the "openness" of Being: "In this openness alone do the gods and man find their way to one another, when such an openness is granted to them. This openness opens itself when that comes which is over man and the gods in that coming from above, it permits an opening to open so that there can be the true [unhiddenness].

This which opens from above and before is the holy . . . the holy opens itself to man and the gods as well"[28] Here we must find the radical difference between Heidegger's thought and the negative theology of Dionysius the Areopagite and John of the Cross.

In regard to Dionysius' thesis we should notice that, although for him divine Being is both revealed and hidden in every being, God's Being is visible only for a few, that is, the object of a Theophany, and in this "every human capacity is overcome": "He [God] takes the one who has been struck by the holy Spirit into himself in the way that is possible for him, grants a vision to him [θεοφάνια] of his radiance, grants to him a share of this radiance, and thereby teaches them to copy this as much as possible."[29] Dionysius points out that man is led to a "higher," "unearthly" radiance that enables him to engage in a vision that lets him, with humility, see what is invisible.[30] In this case the Platonic, *unhistorical*, original essence of man is emphasized: "When we step back into the eternal and immortal reality . . . we are completely consumed by this holy vision."[31]

This thesis leads Dionysius and John of the Cross so far that they must demand that all activities related to the senses "be given up."[32] Both describe a task that leads to a complete ἀνεργασία and so to dispensing even with the word (ἀφτέσια).

Dionysius and John of the Cross find the historicity of God in the unique phenomenon of the appearance of Christ. Dionysius writes: "Now we know that the holy writings . . . utilize expressions that are appropriate to man, sensory expressions, and that what is above beings is veiled by grace so that that has a form and an image, which is without form or image ("καὶ μορφὰς καὶ τύπους τοῖς ἀμορφώτοις τε καὶ ἀτυπώτοις περιτιθείδης").[33]

The essential difference between Heidegger's philosophy of unhiddenness and negative theology as found in Dionysius and John of the Cross consists in their completely different starting points. They understand divine Being as a Being in and for itself, outside of history, so that it emerges primarily through the theophany of a mystic. Heidegger, however, claims that Being emerges through the "clearing" of different, purely historical spaces in which par-

ticular gods, institutions, and arts appear historically. For negative theology, as well as for Heidegger, Being (God) is "sublime," but in a fundamentally different sense. In negative theology the sublime and elevated nature of God is defined in the sense that it finally can be made visible only by relinquishing those capacities (rational knowledge, memory, and will) that make possible the "day" of rational life.

For Heidegger, too, Being is not exhausted by beings and so Being is sublime and elevated in this sense for him. It remains hidden in its essence in its revelation in beings. But for Heidegger the rational process of thought remains necessary in the sphere of beings—where Being reveals itself—insofar as this process "fixes" the order of beings. The giving of grounds establishes and defines beings as the particular things found here and now that announce Being. Beings belong to the revelation of Being and must be "held to" in their particular historical form, but always in the sign of the "opening" of Being. Only by remembering Being is the way to the "new" open, the way to hope.

Our success or failure to hold ourselves open to the new gives us the possibilities for beginning or ending historical process. "When the unhiddenness of Being does not present itself, it dismisses the slow disappearance of all that can offer healing to beings. This disappearance of what heals takes with it the openness of the holy. The closed nature of the holy darkens the luminescence of the divine."[34]

Conclusion. Cristoforo Landino (1424–98)

IT IS MOST IMPORTANT TO DISTINGUISH three different forms of philosophizing and to see them against the background of Heidegger's doctrine of unhiddenness. Only then can we recognize the significance of Heidegger's thought and the originality of Italian Humanism.

The first conception of philosophy, the one that Heidegger defines as the "metaphysics of beings," asks only about the relationships between beings and grants supremacy to the search for truth. This

form of thought is determined for Heidegger by the forgetfulness of Being. The truth that the metaphysics of things claims to possess holds forever and everywhere. Hence, the only language which such a metaphysics can recognize is rational in nature, and, conversely, poetic language cannot have any scientific character in this view.

The second version of philosophy is what I have tried to present in my discussion of negative theology. It rejects the primacy of rational thought and language and is directed solely to the problem of the unhiddenness of Being, whereby "Being is identified with God." Being is fundamentally distinguished from beings and is not rationally definable. Beings and the rational form of thought are a basic hindrance to the experience of "God." Beings are regarded again and again in a negative way as obstructions to the soul that is trying to get a view of God. The poetic word serves here only to let us gain access to Being conceived in an unhistorical sense. Metaphorical thought serves only to further the "Platonic form" of thought that opposes the historical.

Finally, the third form of philosophizing is that of Heidegger. It is radically different from either of the other two forms of thinking, for it proposes that the revelation of Being in particular beings is the origin of the fundamental "historical" character of the "unhiddenness" of Being, its appearance in a "clearing". The claim of Being must constantly be uncovered by the recollection of Being and so kept present. At the same time each particular being must be established in a particular situation by rationality. Neither limiting oneself to the recollection of Being nor the denial of beings, as in the case of the negative theology, nor adhering to the primacy of the rational, as in the case of the metaphysics of being, can lead us to the solution of unhiddenness.

I have tried to show how the programmatic thesis of Heidegger's about the non-literary character of poetry was originally set forth in Italian Humanism. It must be recognized that a new form of philosophizing began here that has no relationship to the Platonic and Aristotelian traditions nor to the later rationalistic attempts that began with Descartes and tried to give a new foundation to

philosophy and science. Modern thought, which began with Descartes, returned to the traditional scheme of thought and did everything possible to pass over the Humanist tradition.

The Humanist tradition never developed without interruption. Platonic thought entered into the efforts of the Humanists again and again and prevented a continuous development of their ideas. A characteristic example of this can be given in the thought of Cristoforo Landino. In his introductory lecture at the Studio Fiorentino in 1458, he begins with a basic thesis about the essence and function of poetry similar to that which we found in Mussato, Salutati, Boccaccio, and Pontano. Landino claims that poetry takes precedence "over all the liberal arts because poetry encompasses them all" ("poesia non dirò delle arti degli antichi chiamate liberali, ma la quale tutte quelle in sè comprendere").[35]

The implications of this claim can be recognized only when we recall that the seven liberal arts, according to the medieval world view, encompassed the entirety of the sciences. The trivium contained the sciences of the *word*—grammar, logic, and rhetoric; the quadrivium contained the sciences of *number* and measurement—arithmetic, geometry, astronomy, and music.

Landino's thesis receives a thorough founding in the introduction dedicated to Duke Federico da Montefeltro in the third book of the *Camaldolese Discourses* published in Florence in 1480. Poetry's task is to express in a sublime manner what is contained in God's hidden nature ("tum maxime excelsa quaedam et in ipso divinitatis fonte recondite promant"). Fundamental reality is revealed through the crust of the sensory, which means that metaphor has a primary function. This forbids us from taking poetry to be a game or a mere way of amusing ourselves ("meras fabellas ad . . . aures ablectandas ludere credantur").

As proof in his introductory lecture at the Studio Fiorentino, Landino presents the fact that all holy texts, those of the Greeks, the Jews, and those of Christianity, always make use of metaphorical language. It was, as Landino explains, not the philosophers but the poets who proclaimed the laws by means of which human society was first constituted. "There was no historian in Greece when

Homer described the heroic times and the famous struggles of the Trojans. There were no philosophers when the same poet proclaimed all that leads to a good and blissful life."[36]

Poetic activity is essentially creative insofar as its works provide an immediate view of situations in order to teach us their meaning for the future of the community. The poets are creators in the highest measure because of the directness of their language and what they point out to us. "The poets are rightly termed *Vates*, from *vi mentis*, in Latin because all of them are characterized by great agitation and intellectual effort. The Greeks called them *poetae*, a derivation from the verb *poieo* which means to create."[37]

The parallel between these claims of Landino's and the theses that we found in the writings of the other Humanists proves, however, to be illusory. For in Landino's further remarks the influence of Platonic thought becomes more and more apparent. Poetry has its primacy only to the extent that it leads man, who always lives in a concrete historical situation, to a reality that lies "outside of time and history."

Poetry serves for Landino only to transport us back "to our original fatherland" ("rivolare all' antica patria").[38] As our souls dwelled in heaven they participated in that harmony in which the eternal spirit of God consists and from which the movement and order of the heavens comes. But they then dove into the earthly slime ("nel terreno limo sommersi") and can only now hear the musical relationships that are our basis.[39] Poetry leads to a necessary liberation from our earthly ties, because the soul is hindered by the senses from exercising its original activity ("è dai terreni legami retardato l'animo.").[40]

Platonic metaphysics comes into the foreground in Landino's thought and in Ficino. It becomes the decisive force for the later thinkers of the Renaissance in their observations of poetry and art, and finally alienates them from the original problem that was most important for Humanism.

Notes

Notes

Chapter I

1. A version of this chapter, except for the third section, appeared in *Philosophy and Rhetoric* XIII (1980): 79–98.
2. See Ludwig Wittgenstein, *Tractatus logico-philosophicus*, trans. D. F. Pears and B.F. McGuinness (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1961).
3. W. Stegmüller, *Wissenschaftliche Erklärang und Begründung* (Berlin, 1969), I:56.
4. Martin Heidegger, "The End of Philosophy and the Task of Thinking" in *On Time and Being*, trans. Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1972), pp. 55–73.
5. Ibid., p. 58.
6. Ibid., p. 57.
7. Ibid., p. 65
8. Martin Heidegger, *On the Way to Language*, trans. Peter D. Hertz and Joan Stambaugh (New York: Harper and Row, 1971), p. 63.
9. Ibid., p. 61.
10. Ibid., p. 73.
11. Plato *Phaedrus* 528.e.6.
12. Ibid., 259. 3.
13. Plato *Laws* 665a. See Tr. Georgiades, *Musik und Rhytmus bei den Griechen* (Hamburg, 1958).
14. Pindar *Dith.* 2. Fragm. 70 b23.
15. Aristotle *Metaphysics* XII. 1069a. 18.
16. Ibid., VI. 1026a. 10.
17. Dante *De vulgari eloquentia* I. 9. 11.
18. Ibid., I. 16. 1.
19. Dante *Convivio* I. 10. 9.
20. Dante *De vulgari eloquentia* I. 18. 8.
21. See E. Grassi, *Die Macht der Phantasie: Zur Geschichte abendländischen Denkens* (Königstein / Taunus: Atheneum, 1979).

22. Leonardo Bruni, *Humanistische-philosophische Schriften*, hrsg. Hans Baron (Leipzig, 1928), p. 89.
23. Ibid., p. 124.
24. L. Bruni *Epistolarium* II. 186 or *Ad P. P. Histrum Dialogus, hrsg. Thomas Klette (Greifswald, 1889), pp. 56 and 59.*
25. *L. Bruni, Dialogus*, p. 44
26. Giovanni Boccaccio, *De genealogia deorum* (Bari, 1951), XVI, p. 706.
27. Ibid., XVI. 8, p. 669, line 27
28. G. Boccaccio, *Vita di Dante* (Florence, 1883), pp. 5–7.
29. Ibid., p. 59.
30. Ibid., p. 59.
31. G. Boccaccio, *De genealogia deorum*, XVI. 8. p. 701, line 31.
32. Ibid., XVI. 8, p. 701, line 13.
33. Diod., IV. 22.
34. Coluccio Salutati, *De laboribus Herculis*, ed. B. L. Ullmann (Zürich, 1951), I. 1. p. 3)
35. Ibid., I. 1, p. 3.
36. Ibid., I. 11, p. 6.
37. Ibid., I. 18, p. 8.
38. Ibid., I. 18, p. 8.
39. Ibid., I. 22, p. 16.
40. Ibid., I. 17.
41. Ibid., II. p. 587 (first ed. 1. 9).
42. Ibid., II. p. 588 (first ed. 1. 9).
43. G. B. Vico, *The New Science*, rev. trans. by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1968), par. 16.
44. Ibid., par. 17.
45. Ibid., par. 533.
46. Ibid., par. 34.
47. This attitude of mind, which takes the intellect as the measure and starting point for investigations of past ages, Vico termed the "conceit of scholars." See *The New Science*, par. 127 and Donald P. Verene, *Vico's Science of Imagination* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1981).
48. Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1961), p. 127.
49. Ibid., p. 125.
50. Ibid., p. 128.
51. Ibid., p. 132.

52. Ibid., p. 134.
53. Ibid., p. 121.

Chapter II

1. Martin Heidegger, *Brief über den Humanismus*, 2nd ed. (Bern, 1954), pp. 63–64. Emphasis added.
2. Martin Heidegger, *Grundbegriffe* (Frankfurt am Main, 1981); see also *Holzwege* (Frankfurt am Main, 1975).
3. See Aristotle *Metaphysics* 1006a.
4. Martin Heidegger, "Zur Sache des Denkens" (Tübingen, 1976), p. 80.
5. Ibid., p. 76.
6. *The New Science of Giambattista Vico*, trans. from the 3rd ed. by Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 1948), p. 19.
7. Immanuel Kant, *Gesammelte Werke*, ed. W. Weisshedel (Wiesbaden, 1975), x, p. 249.
8. Arthur Schopenhauer, *Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung* in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. W. Frhr von Löhn (Darmstadt, 1968), II, p. 544.
9. G. Hamann, *Werke* (Berlin, 1821), I, p. 505.
10. Martin Heidegger, *Der Satz vom Grund* (Pfullingen, 1975), pp. 126, 129, 146, 158, 161.
11. Ibid., p. 195.
12. Ibid., p. 195.
13. Ibid., p. 195.
14. Ibid., p. 196.
15. Ibid., p. 201.
16. Ibid., p. 210.
17. Ibid., p. 199.
18. Ibid., p. 205. Emphasis added.
19. Ibid., p. 205.
20. Martin Heidegger, *An Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (N.Y.: Doubleday-Anchor, 1961), p. 11.
21. Heidegger, *Satz vom Grund*, p. 158.
22. Ibid., p. 122.
23. Ibid., p. 207.
24. Friedrich Nietzsche, *Werke* (Munich, 1956), III, p. 358.
25. Nietzsche, *Werke*, I, p. 23.
26. Ibid.

Chapter III

1. Martin Heidegger, *Platons Lehre von der Wahrheit. Mit einem Brief über den Humanismus* (Bern, 1947).
2. Martin Heidegger, *Letter on Humanism, The Existential Tradition*, ed. N. Languldi (N.Y.: Doubleday and Co., 1971), p. 211.
3. Ibid., p. 218.
4. Ibid., p. 218
5. See the second, historical part of Ernesto Grassi, *Humanismus und Marxismus* (Reinbeck: Rohwolt, 1973); *Macht des Bildes*, 2nd ed. (Munich, 1979); *Macht der Phantasie* (Königstein/Taunus, 1979).
6. G. Pontano, *Dialoghi*, ed. G. Previtera (Florence, 1943).
7. Pontano, "Aegidius," in *Dialoghi*, p. 269, line 13.
8. Ibid., p. 269, line 40 and p. 270 line 2
9. Ibid., p. 270, line 40.
10. Ibid., p. 272.
11. Ibid., p. 272, line 20.
12. Ibid., p. 272, line 36.
13. Pontano, "Antonius," in *Dialoghi*, p. 58 line 18.
14. Ibid., p. 73, line 25.
15. Ibid., p. 67, line 29. Cf. Vergil *Aeneid* III. v. 570ff.
16. Ibid., p. 67, lines 31-32 and p. 68, line 3.
17. Ibid., p. 68, line 8.
18. Ibid., p. 68, line 24.
19. Ibid., p. 68, line 25.
20. Ibid., p. 70, line 38.
21. Ibid., p. 69, line 35.
22. Ibid., p. 69, line 35.
23. Ibid., p. 70, line 1.
24. Ibid., p. 72, line 13.
25. Ibid., p. 73, line 10.
26. Ibid., p. 85, line 20.
27. Ibid., p. 83, line 24.
28. Ibid., p. 85, line 24.
29. Ibid., p. 76, line 13.
30. Ibid., p. 85, line 12.
31. A Mussato, *Tragoediae, Ecologae et Fragmenta, Epistulae* (Batavorum, n.d.). This edition is based upon the one published in Venice in 1636.
32. Mussato, *Tragoediae*, "Epistula fratris Johannini a Mantus," 54 E.
33. Ibid., 54 F.

34. Cicero *De natura deorum* III. 53.
35. Isodore of Seville *Etymologicon* VIII. 7. 5.
36. C. Salutati, *De laboribus Herculis*, ed. B. Ullmann (Zürich, 1951), vol. I, I. 7. 10.
37. Ibid., vol. I, I. 7. 11.
38. Mussato, *Tragoediae*, "Epistula," XVIII. 61 A.
39. Ibid., IV. 40 F.
40. Ibid., VII. 44 B.
41. Ibid., VII. 44 C.
42. Ibid., IV. 41 A.
43. Ibid., XVIII. 60 E.
44. Ibid., XVIII. 60 F.
45. Ibid., VII. 44 C.
46. Ibid., IV. 41 A.
47. Ibid., VII. 44 D.
48. Ibid., VII. 45 C.
49. Ibid., VII. 45 C.
50. Ibid., IV. 41 C.
50. Ibid., IV. 41 C.
51. Ibid., 57 C.
52. Ibid., 57 C.
53. Ibid., XVIII. 56 B.
54. Ibid., VII. 44 C.
55. Ibid., VII. 44 E.
56. Ibid., VII. 44 C.
57. Aristotle *Poetics* 1459 a 8.
58. Ibid., 1459 a 4.
59. Aristotle *Rhetoric* 1412 a 11.
60. Ibid., 1412 a 12.
61. Ibid., 1412 a 12.
62. Salutati *De laboribus Herculis* I. 2. 12.
63. Ibid., I. 1. 19, 20.
64. Ibid., I. 2. 20.
65. Ibid., I. 2. 6.
66. Ibid., II. 2. 12.
67. Aristotle *Mechanica* 847 a 13.
68. Salutati *De laboribus Herculis* I, chap. 9.
69. Cicero *Tusculanae* V. 23. 66.
70. Salutati *De laboribus Herculis* I. 9. 14
71. Ibid., I. 9. 10.

72. Ibid., I 9. 11
73. Ibid., I. 9. 12
74. Ibid., I. 9. 14.
75. Ibid., I 9. 12–13.
76. Ibid., I. 9. 12.
77. Ibid., I. 9 12
78. Ibid., I 9 12.
79. Ibid., I 9. 13.
80. G. B. Vico, *De antiquissima italorum sapientia* (Bari, 1914), p. 183.
81. Ibid., p. 179.
82. Martin Heidegger, *Vorträge und Aufsätze* (Pfüllingen, 1978), p. 131.
83. Ibid., p. 191.

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1. Martin Heidegger, *Nietzsche* (Pfüllingen, 1961), I. 80.
2. Ibid., p. 455.
3. Dante *De Monarchia*.
4. Ibid., I. 1.
5. Ibid., I 2.
6. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*, I. 386.
7. Ibid., I. 387.
8. Ibid.,
9. Martin Heidegger, *Introduction to Metaphysics*, trans. Ralph Manheim (New York: Doubleday-Anchor, 1961), pp. 136–37.
10. Dionysius Areopagita, *Theologia Mystica*, PG III. 1032 D.
11. Ibid., III. 1033 A.
12. Ibid., III. 1033 B/C.
13. Ibid., III. 1033 C.
14. Dionysius Areopagita, *The Names of God*, PG 588 B, 10.
15. Ibid., 697 A.
16. Ibid., 596 C.
17. John of the Cross, "Prologo," *Obras completas: La llama de amor viva* (Burgos, 1959).
18. Ibid., pp. 993–95.
19. Ibid., "Subida, al monte Carmelo," II. S. 510.
20. Ibid., "Subida," III. 13, p. 703.
21. Ibid., "Subida," III. 1. 671.
22. John of the Cross, *La noche obscura*, II. G. 499.

23. Ibid., "Subida," II. 421 and IX 908.
24. Ibid.
25. Ibid., "Subida," II. 15.
26. Ibid., "Subida," II. 6 499.
27. Ibid., "Subida," I. 6. 500.
28. Martin Heidegger, *Erläuterungen zu Hölderlins Dichtung* (Frankfurt am Main: Vittorio Klostermann, 1951), p. 139.
29. Dionysius Areopagita, *The Names of God*, PG, 588 D.
30. Ibid., 588 A.
31. Ibid., 592 C.
32. See Dionysius, *Theologia mystica*, I. 1. 998 B and I. 3. 1001 A.
33. Dionysius Areopagita, *The Names of God*, 592 B.
34. Heidegger, *Nietzsche*. II. 394.
35. Cristoforo Landino, *Orazioni* in M. Lentzen, *Reden* (Munich, 1974), p. 22, line 20.
36. Ibid., p. 25, line 112.
37. Ibid., p. 25, line 100.
38. Ibid., p. 24, line 77.
39. Ibid., p. 24, line 73.
40. Ibid., p. 24, line 79.

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